



# *WHAT IS WRONG WITH INDIA*

*By*

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KITABISTAN SERIES

No. 6

KITABISTAN  
ALLAHABAD

*By the Author*

1. INDIAN TANGLE
2. INDIAN PATH-FINDER
3. RHYTHM OF LIVING
4. LOOKING AHEAD IN WAR TIME

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PRINTED BY J. K. SHARMA AT THE ALLAHABAD LAW  
JOURNAL PRESS, ALLAHABAD, AND PUBLISHED BY  
KITABISTAN, ALLAHABAD

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The thanks of Publishers and Author are due to the following publishers for passages quoted in this book :—Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd., Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd., Messrs. Victor Gollancz Ltd., Messrs. Faber & Faber Ltd., Messrs. The Times Publishing Co., Ltd., and Messrs. Hutchinsons & Co., Ltd.



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## PREFACE

About twelve years ago, in my book THE INDIAN TANGLE, I investigated the difficulties of the then Indian situation which was at that time drawing the attention of the whole world, owing to the fact that a representative Round Table Conference had been summoned by the British Government to sit in London. The problems that were looming large in the horizon were then set forth in detail. Certain solutions were suggested before the new Government of India Act was framed and put before both the Houses of Parliament. The incomplete realisation of the hopes of those who contributed towards the formulation of the scheme of 1935 has been the main cause of the present discontent. The Federation of All-India has not come to pass. Provincial autonomy which was introduced without responsibility at the centre has broken down. Thus, we see that the wheel of progress in regard to India's constitutional advance, instead of going forward up the hill has slipped backwards, down to where

we practically were in 1930 when the first Round Table Conference was convened.

This is not the time some critics will say to discuss what is wrong with India. Most of us Indians, who think over our present situation a great deal, know what is wrong, speak about the situation with knowledge and experience, and press home the real difficulties and the dangers upon the minds of those responsible for the Government of India. There will be many critics on the other hand, who will question my competence or the soundness of my judgments, and with a big question-mark read through the pages of the book with some amazement. I have been, they say, an exile for several years as a retired Indian Civil Servant, and out of touch with the country. They may not remember my connection with the administration of British and Indian India for over 35 years, and my special work in Cochin, Mysore and Kashmir. They may only have a faint recollection of my voluntary work in England and some other foreign countries, writing and lecturing to make the Indian problem familiar from an international point of view during my extensive travels for the past 14 years, and through my INDIAN AFFAIRS, a quarterly journal

founded and conducted in London.

The theme of this work is undoubtedly critical, and I may not succeed in disarming my critics who may go through the following pages with some prejudice. I have written this book with a deep sense of duty to my country and our people with a detachment which no Indian today can claim. I am neither a Hindu or Muslim, Christian or Parsi, Sikh, Jain or a member of the Depressed Classes. My father Sevabrata Sasipada, a high caste Kulin Brahmin of Bengal, was a follower of the Brahma-Samaj, a theistic movement founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy just over 100 years ago, and devoted 60 years of his life to social service. He was the first in India to break bread with the untouchables, to start a movement for their uplift, and did a great deal for the spread of women's education in his province. My mother was the first high caste Hindu lady to go to England, where I was born. My birth, British and Indian University education, my family traditions and subsequent administrative experience in various capacities, and last but not least, my extensive travels gave me ample opportunity to study social and political conditions, not only of my own country, but all those which I visited and which

were undergoing momentous changes. I noticed the heavy clouds that were gathering before the coming storm. I experienced 18 months of the war in England and published early in 1940 a book **LOOKING AHEAD IN WAR TIME**, in which Indian problems were discussed.

Returning to India, I have been engaged in the study of recent developments of the Indian situation, and whether my conclusions will be generally accepted or not, I have sufficient courage to face criticism, and my main object is to stimulate logical thinking at a time when views on all Indian questions, social, economic and political have assumed a somewhat partisan and sectarian character.

This book was written in 1942 and is somewhat behind the times. The delay in publication is due to unforeseen causes and whether I should revise it to bring it up to date is a question that has weighed on my mind. But I let the MS. go to the Press as it is in the belief that the problems dealt with are no nearer solution than they were two years ago, and the conclusions and suggestions can still be pressed forward for consideration.

## CHAPTER I

### PROBLEMS OF THE INDIAN TANGLE

It is just over twelve years since my book *THE INDIAN TANGLE*\* was published in London. The concluding portion of the preface indicates the scope of that work. The following is an extract from it:—

“The Indian Tangle to-day is receiving world-wide attention because of its attractiveness and its alluring possibilities. These I have attempted to explain looking well into the future. In the life of nations, time has to be measured in centuries not in decades. Believing as I do, that India will wield a mighty influence in a new world still in the making if she conserves and not destroys her spiritual force and inspiration, I have attempted in the following pages to indicate the dangers lying in the path towards the fulfilment of her future destiny, without being dogmatic about the soundness or efficacy of this or that method of

\*Messrs. Hutchinson, London, 1931.

approach to unravel the tangle."

The present book describing what is wrong with India, reviews the position as it presents itself to-day to a careful observer who seeks to understand it. It is a sequel to my previous book. The conclusions that I reached by a dispassionate study of the Indian problem as it was then may be briefly summarised here.

Firstly, it was pointed out that difference of religion cannot be forgotten in a country where religion is the heart and soul of the people, and is symbolised everywhere by its temples and mosques. The opinion was expressed that at the present time there is more religious intolerance than there was half a century ago. A question was, therefore, asked: What are the prospects of a national Indian Government at Delhi under a democratic Federation with the franchise extended and minorities safeguarded, without serious breakdowns.

I expressed my grave apprehension in the same section of the book as to the satisfactory development of Party Government in India, in the following terms:—"Communal divisions in India are increasing owing chiefly to political causes. The unifying tendency of British rule must diminish in proportion to the development

of self-government, and the opposite tendency of numerous groups being formed, even amongst sections following one religion, is already in evidence. This will eventually lead to the formation of innumerable political parties out of which it will be impossible to form even a Coalition Cabinet. One has further to remember that the so-called majority party, viz., the Hindu section of the population, is becoming gradually a more heterogeneous body and disintegrating into many separate groups which will not act in concert for party purposes in a democratic constitution."

Turning to the second main problem in India, which is still dominant in the minds of the people, viz., British dominance or equality, I quoted Lord Macaulay's famous declaration close upon a century ago. He said:...“One day the people of India would demand European institutions in the Government of their country. When such a day will ever come, I know not. Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history.” John Bright pleaded India's cause, in terms which are well worth repetition. He said:...“Your good can only come through India's good, help India to be prosperous and you will help your own prosperity. There are but two modes of

gaining anything by your connection with India,—the one is by plundering the people of India, and the other by trading with them. I prefer to do it by trading with them. But in order that England may become rich by trading with India, India itself must become rich."

I concluded the chapter with the view, that though British dominance will be a thing of the past, *equality of status as between Britain and India, presupposes equality of status amongst the Indians themselves*, and my conclusions were:—

"Whenever there is dominance, there is tyranny. Till our people are freed from the dominance of caste and communal exclusiveness, the British connection based on equality of status is essential for India's national unity and salvation."

In the chapter on British pledges and their interpretation, I have given in my book an historical summary of important declarations by British statesmen from time to time, culminating in the famous declaration of August 1917 with special reference to responsible Government. I laid special emphasis on the preamble to the Act of 1919, which definitely described the declared policy of Parliament to be the progressive realisation of responsible Government in British India, as an

integral part of the Empire. I also discussed the interpretation of the term Dominion Status, quoting the Imperial Conference declaration of 1926, and concluded that the present tangle in the Indian political situation was partly of Britain's making but not a little due to the peculiar conditions of religious, social and economic life amongst our people.

Discussing the force of Nationalism in India, and its gradual development through the influence of the National Congress I said: "India has begun to develop, paradoxical though it may seem, an acute form of provincial and separate State Nationalism. Instead of paving the way for a United India this will break the social and economic structure, causing a debris of disorganised and self-centred groups which, judging from past history will be either the tools or the victims of foreign invaders."

In the chapter headed "Empire Trade Relations", which drew considerable attention at the time owing to the Ottawa Conference, I laid emphasis in my last book on the controversies which were then raging about Imperial Preferences and the attempt on the part of the British Government to exaggerate the importance of the Fiscal Autonomy Convention. In brief, I described the Indian economic

situation in the following words:—"She has a practical monopoly of the world's supply of jute, indigo, myrobalan, teak, mowra seed, lac and til, and there is a steady demand for her cotton, hides, skins, oil-seeds and spices. In fact, the unexploited wealth of India is almost unparalleled, for besides her crops and her timber she is well endowed with minerals, including coal, and certain mineral oils, and her hydraulic power is capable of development to a remarkable extent."

India was once famous for her craftsmanship. Ship-building and iron and steel manufacture were carried on extensively, and her silk, muslin and other textiles were famous. As pointed out by the Industrial Commission, it was only in the eighteenth century, at the time of the Industrial revolution, that India lost pace in the progressive march of industry and there arose "the erroneous idea that tropical countries with their naturally fertile lands and trying climate, were suited to the production of raw materials rather than to manufactures."

Regarding the future outlook, a few sentences in the concluding portion of the TANGLE would indicate what I visualised as a probable tendency. This is what I said:—

"In the struggle that may ensue between ex-

terior forces and internal groups, the evolution of Indian nationalism may take two opposite courses: one the Islamic and the other the Proletariat, if I may use the word in a new sense, led by the future leaders of the Depressed Classes. The proletariat movement in India may find its inspiration from the East and if ever China is reconstructed or Japan conquers China and builds a Pan-Asiatic Empire, the Mongolian culture, founded on Confucianism and Buddhism as distinguished from the Islamic, will invade Eastern India. The Mogul hordes, representing the most predominant amongst the outside Muslim States and Kingdoms, again throwing themselves on the fertile plains of North-West India will, with the aid of Muslim Nationalism, found a new empire at Delhi, stirred by a new Pan-Islamism.

“Thus, while the East will find a new Buddhistic culture resuscitating, so to speak, the era of Asoka of the second century B. C. the West will bring forth a new Akbar. Between the East and West of India there will be a clash of cultures and of peoples. In this prognosis, ancient Hindu culture finds no place.”

Many books have been written since, which have recorded India’s slow progress towards the

goal and pointed out obstacles and how to overcome them. This is another perhaps a feeble attempt on the same lines. In the rapid march of time and the clash of cymbals and discordant music, logical thinking and constructive ideas are rare to find. My main object is to stimulate them by close study of India's immediate problems so that when the post-war reconstruction begins, the debris that has fallen may be cleared, and foundations dug for a new structure in which the millions of Indians may find a new life and a new nationhood.

## CHAPTER II

### INDIA'S AWAKENING?

The “Unchanging East” is an epithet that has been applied to Asiatic countries during the past century or more. Whether the European races describe Asiatics as living in a stagnant atmosphere or whether they picture the East in colours which represent its true psychology, is a matter of doubt. In the clash between the East and the West, Eastern peoples rightly or wrongly attribute to the Western nations a desire to exploit. Hence, Asiatics resent this description. Japan was the first Asiatic country to prove within the space of less than a half-century that she can be dynamic. Her ambition to be a first-class nation has been realised. She successfully absorbed western methods of Government and introduced western methods of Science and applied branches of knowledge for the development of her industries, the extension of her commerce and for the remodeling of her Army and Navy. She was the first also to defeat in a major war an European world-

power. She had the advantage over other Eastern countries of being an Island Empire with a growing population, imitative genius and national unity seldom marred by any domestic differences. She follows a religion too, which is nothing but a strong sentiment of national patriotism. In her phenomenal meteoric growth as a nation, she has overstepped her bounds and now adopted a policy of ruthless aggression.

China, though in many respects unchanging, conservative, and static, has recently shown signs of movement, indicating a general national awakening. The contrast between China and Japan is really a psychological difference based on the fundamental characteristics of Chinese culture. The movement from a static to a dynamic condition may take a longer period than in Japan, but slow but sure may be the case with the ancient Chinese race. She has shown a remarkable tenacity of purpose and national unity in her prolonged and successful resistance to Japanese aggression.

We in India abhor the characterisation of the East of which India is a part as unchanging. We want to move quickly. With the impact of western civilisation mainly through the British connection, we who have benefited by western educa-

tion and travel can shake off our past traditions with considerable ease, ignore all injurious customs and usages, discard all unprogressive practices, purge the social system of its evils and follow a principle of absorption of what may make for development. What is wrong with India to-day is a question that can be answered without difficulty with reference to this problem. India is doubtless changing rapidly, but is she changing to suit world conditions and adapting herself to the changed environment of her national existence?

As an Indian whose family was one of the very first to break away from caste in Bengal under the influence of the Brahmo-Samaj movement, and whose education was distinctly British, I may be suspected of judging the social, political and economic conditions of India to-day from the British point of view. On the other hand, my experience of the living conditions of my countrymen in South India, Cochin and Mysore, and Kashmir, right from the top of affluence to the very depth of poverty and suffering, gives me the advantage of comparison based on personal contact and study of correct human values. I can definitely say that India has changed, but little, if we mean the millions who live in the villages and not in towns. For

example, Bombay is not India and it is only in times of serious trouble that we see the real features of Indian life in all grades coming to the surface. As for example, when there was a panic in the big cities of Calcutta, and Bombay in 1942 after the Japanese raids, and recently when there was a tidal wave of suffering in Bengal due to starvation which brought out the hopeless economic conditions of the multitude of our people who have not got the least power to resist the crisis, and who live from hand to mouth day to day.

Bengal led the way in the latter part of the 19th century in every field of national effort introduced by national leaders in the sphere of social, religious and political reform. But to-day how does she compare with other provinces, although there are many eminent men and women who still keep up the old traditions of Bengal. The Girls' school my father started in 1865 amidst much Brahmin opposition with my orthodox mother as its first pupil, still goes on but wrinkled and decrepit with age, with no life or vitality, and yet, Bengal boasted of having the first college for women, and the first lady graduate of the country. Why this set-back so specially noticeable in one of the most advanced provinces of India?

While it can be admitted that there has been progress in many directions there had been a reaction in others; and the sum-total of achievements after a century since the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was the father of modern India, can be counted in plus and minus figures. When the history of India for the past hundred years is written, the student of the future will wonder why, with such a promising start in the march towards progress and enlightenment, there has been a halt and stagnation so far as the bulk of population is concerned, and why her teeming millions have not moved out of their rut but still wallow in poverty and superstition. Religious feasts and festivals still have a grip over our people. Dasara, Holi, and Ganesha with all their traditions give that colouring and a ray of sunshine to the people of Hindu India who still believe in the doctrine of Karma, the law of transmigration and astrological influences. The Mohurrum is still a national Muslim festival, the celebration of which often shows a clash of sentiments still surviving amongst the two sects of Muslims. Will India ever change and produce a different culture, in which Hindus and Muslims sharply divided now, will have unity and concord under a synthesis of humanitarian

philosophy? Even with our complete political independence we shall not change the outlook of life unless religion as it is practised to-day undergoes a re-orientation under new leaders who will adapt it to the needs of modern circumstances.

Lowell Thomas in his book called INDIA THE LAND OF THE BLACK PAGODA said: "Hinduism as expounded by the Brahmin Pandits is the history of religions rather than a religion,—a compendium and not a creed; a library of travel stories in the trackless path of speculative enquiry rather than a guide-book to bliss". Here is another quotation from the same author: "Standing or sitting, awake or asleep, the Hindu has a religious sanction and an appropriate deity for every act of daily life". Sir Alfred Lyall, a very distinguished Indian civil servant in one of his works said: "Egypt, Babylon and Greece have gone. China is fast changing. Only this Ganges' land remains firm in her old faith and old ways. How far is Hinduism adapting itself to modern conditions? Here in Benares, the palaces and pilgrims, the shrines and flowers are always the same. There is timelessness about her streets and eternity in the flux of her hurrying river—Peace in her temples."

Hinduism shows no signs even of internal renaissance or reform. But what is Hinduism? The term does not find a place in our scriptures. It is more a synthesis rather than a faith common to all living within its fold.

IN THE BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF INDIA the author says:—"That the gulf which separates the Muhammedan from the Hindu is a wide one becomes apparent from the moment that one begins to understand the nature of the social systems which are the product of Islam and Hinduism respectively. That of the latter, as has been shown, is exclusive; that of the former is communistic. Under the Hindu social system men are graded minutely and segregated in an infinite number of water-tight compartments: under Islam all men are equal. Hinduism is essentially aristocratic: Muhammedanism is as emphatically democratic. The result of these differences is astonishing. Two immense communities live side by side over vast tracts of the Indian continent; yet neither can claim a relative within the ranks of the other, for Hindu caste restrictions make intermarriage an impossibility."\*

Hindu culture based on the metaphysics and abstruse philosophy of ancient India is rigid

\* Pg. 214.

and inelastic and disdainful of Western influences. Arnold's famous lines oft quoted give a clue to this attitude:—

"The East bowed low before the blast  
in patient deep disdain;  
It let the legions thunder past, then turned  
to thought again."

The Muslims are moving towards a new order with the example of other Muslim Empires outside, such as Turkey and Egypt. The Pan-Arab Federation also fascinates them. All the same in India, on the whole, modern ways of living, amongst those who have travelled and taken what suits them from scientific knowledge and western education, have affected only the minute percentage of the total population of the country. The majority of us still cling to our communal laws governing us from our birth to death, and when we discard them we have no others to adopt. The majority of us—educated Indians—do not live up to our convictions and lead two lives with the fear of the group or caste conscience which we dare not offend.

Whatever may be the end of our political struggle, we can never be a nation without some kind of social revolution.

There are many observers like Sir Frederic Whyte, who has had ample opportunities to mix with educated Indians in his official capacity and otherwise, and is under the impression that the unchanging East is awakening. In his book THE FUTURE OF EAST AND WEST published by Sidgwick and Jackson in the series "World Problems of To-day", there is a chapter on this subject. As an observer with a purely European background, his conclusions only add to the evidence of the true character of the changes that are coming over at present in India. He says: "The Unchanging East has been held up before us as a great world contrast to the restless enterprising West. No doubt there is historic truth in this antithesis specially in Hindu India, which stands so strangely apart from the rest of Asia." But this is not the only British opinion I quote. If there is little change noticeable by ourselves after a deep study of present-day social, economic and religious conditions, it will be of advantage to us if we compare our impressions with those of other British observers than the one I have just now quoted. In a recent book INDIA AND DEMOCRACY by Sir George Schuster and Guy Wint, we find the following views expressed:—

"At first what strikes the observer of the contemporary scene is how much of the ancient world still persists. If nearly all of India's four hundred millions are consciously or unconsciously caught up in a general metamorphosis—whether through the change in their economic circumstances, or through the new influences which have entered their lives, or through the new social policy of the government yet the great majority have responded still very sluggishly to the new stimuli. Thus, in describing India as it still is at the present time, it is proper to dwell on this antique side and to give it its due and impressive weight.

"Many of the social institutions have undergone surprisingly little change. Caste, the chief peculiarity of Hindu society, continued in being throughout the British period and seems to-day to keep its vitality unabated.

"It is true also that even those Indians, who have exposed themselves to Western influence, try often at the same time to conserve their inherited culture, an effort often involving excruciating mental agony, causing them sometimes to lead their lives in two distinct parts, a Western one and an Indian one, so that they exhibit the

symptoms of a dual personality."

These quotations give a picture very true to the present-day conditions of Indian life generally, and we Indians, no matter of what sect, community, or caste, are fully conscious of them. Can they be eradicated by political changes and the attainment of national independence in the twinkle of time is the question to which different answers are given by different schools of thought. But the fact remains that India still is a part of the unchanging East.

Economically, agriculturally and industrially, India still lags behind even some of the other countries of Asia, and it will take a long time before she can be considered to have attained a dynamic stage in her national progress. The wealth of India is proverbial and has been the attraction of foreign invaders from the time of Alexander the Great, but with an area of about half the size of the United States it has a population of nearly 400 millions. Thus, in the evaluation of material wealth, the population factor is of importance, for the needs of such huge a population can scarcely be met without a progressive rise in the national wealth of the country.

In his book, *INDIA A BIRD'S EYE VIEW*, Earl Ronaldshay, now Marquis of Zetland, says : "A rough estimate of the average income per head of the population in India at the close of the Nineteenth century was £3 a year". It may have increased since to double the figure, even then the standard of living is miserably low. The wealth of India represented by the abundance of her raw materials and agricultural produce, no doubt shows a rise, but what about 80 per cent. of the population engaged in agriculture who contribute to the increased production of wealth in raw materials. Do they have more food, more clothing, better living conditions and less misery due to disease and malnutrition ?

Agriculture provides the livelihood of over 80 per cent. of the people, and industries have not absorbed the excess agricultural population with the result that, the proportion of farm population to the total, increased from 61 in 1891 to 73 in 1931. India has some 300 million acres of cultivable land, and if only four-fifths or 250 million acres are under food crops, food supplies cannot but be inadequate for the whole population. Take, for example, rice. India is the world's largest rice producer next to China. Strangely, however,

with an 18 per cent. rise in population, the output under rice declined by 8 per cent. during the past two decades, and India had to depend largely on Burma rice before the Japanese invasion and now is under the throes of a serious shortage in the most essential food crop of the country. The changes, that have followed in the wake of this terrible war, only prove that India lives on the margin of bare subsistence and any change in the economic arrangements of village life, produces a calamity, leading to loss of life, starvation and tremendous suffering.

Take another source of India's agricultural wealth, viz., live-stock. It is estimated that including sheep and goat, India has 310 million head. It is admitted all round that the live-stock is of a poor quality, small-sized, inefficient and subject to many contagious diseases. Furthermore, the gradual expansion of the cultivated area, at the expense of pastures in the congested areas of India, has adversely affected animal husbandry. A competent writer in a contribution recently made to the Press, one who seems to be well versed with Indian conditions; says : "Although India represents a vast potential area with an abundant labour supply and unlimited market; these are associated

with low spendable income, inefficiency of labour, lack of capital and reluctance on the part of the government to introduce heavy industries." These observations might well have been made fifty years ago. During the War, tremendous activities are in evidence to exploit industrially the resources of India. In post-war reconstruction will the pace be maintained is the question.

The defects of the economic condition of India, which have been noticed during the past four or five decades, still continue. These are lack of education amongst the masses, very limited application of agricultural science, a burdensome land tenure system, inheritance laws that result in fragmentation of holdings and lastly, rapid increase of population.

The Royal Agricultural Commission presided over by the Marquis of Linlithgow, ex-Viceroy, concluded their report by saying that: "No lasting improvement for the standard of living of the great mass of the population can possibly be attained if every enhancement in the purchasing power of the cultivator is to be followed by a proportionate increase of the population." What progress has India made in scientific agriculture with a conservative agricultural population?

"Grow More Food" campaign has been started only now owing to the war, but is it not the case that insufficiency of food-stuffs has not fostered those methods that lead to increased production all round, and the pressure of population is telling heavily on the land? In the transport of agricultural produce also, the poverty of the tiller of the soil militates against any change substituting mechanical transport for the old bullock-cart.

Dr. Aykroyd, Director of Nutrition Research Laboratory, in a recent speech said : "India was neither self-sufficient nor nearly so in the sense that the population was abundantly or satisfactorily fed." Actually, according to his estimate, about 30 per cent. of the population did not get enough food in normal times. I think, in this respect, his estimate is over-sanguine.

Thus, we see, looking at every direction except amongst a few, the bulk of the population of the millions in India remains in a stagnant and static position. Whether a change in the government can bring about within the course of a generation material advance, is a problem that requires to be investigated by the biggest experts in the country, endowed with a constructive statesmanship and broad vision. Even the new Viceroy,

not a stranger to India, recently speaking at the Pilgrim's Club, London said: "In the country to which I go, those evils of poverty, lack of education and disease have to be met possibly on a greater scale than anywhere else." India is still a part of the Unchanging East.

### CHAPTER III

## COMMUNAL TENSION—ITS ROOT CAUSE

One of the grievous diseases from which India is suffering at present is communal feeling. During the thirty-five and odd years of my active service in different parts of India this tension was not noticeable, at all events it had not manifested itself, to the extent that we all deplore. In the Indian States it was practically non-existent. Many theories may be advanced as to its root causes. Generally speaking, it is due to the great backwardness of the masses in matters of education, and the great advance that has taken place among certain sections of the people in political consciousness. Want of education and illiteracy make the population an easy victim of propaganda. As soon as an Indian goes overseas even such a short distance as Ceylon, he forgets his caste and community. The Indian residents in Great Britain do not suffer from any communal feeling. The ostensible cause for communal clashes such as cow-killing or Hindu processions

with music before mosques, is not a new feature in Indian life. Conflicts arising out of these causes, have been taking place without any great political significance for a long time past, but there was a spirit of give-and-take. The communal award of the British Government accentuated the communal spirit in India and for this, people of India are mainly responsible, for they were unable to settle the problem among themselves when the constitutional reforms of 1935 were on the anvil. Separate electorates are appearing to strike a deeper root than anticipated, and the problem of the minorities is assuming a different aspect since the Government of India Act of 1935 was passed. So much for the educated classes. My experience shows that Hindus and Muslims have lived as close neighbours and done business with each other for centuries as one part of India's economic system in the rural parts of India. In Kashmir, there is no cow-killing and by that Hindus and Muslims are no more or less friendly there than elsewhere, but when communalism freely spread into Indian States Kashmir did not fare any better.

The Muslim leader, Mr. Jinnah has openly declared that democracy on the western model

which means Government by the majority is not applicable to India. Even the Princes are now, more or less showing a different attitude, though latterly there have been some signs of change. We all know that under a democratic form of constitution which returned one party to power, the other side represented it as having become partly totalitarian. It is not, therefore, unreasonable to suppose that if India is to further develop along democratic lines, under present conditions the nature of the form of the future constitution of India will have to be materially altered to enable a compromise being established between conflicting ideals. Judging from past experience, whatever form the constitution may take, in practice, it will run the risk of being spoken of as one-sided. Be that as it may, now that we are confronted with an aggressive organisation like the All-India Muslim League, out and out favouring the partition of India and likewise an aggressive All-India Mahasabha and All-India Hindu League determined to oppose any such separation, there is going to be a keen fight for the assertion and maintenance of ideals of an opposing character.

Looking back to the past ten years, we find

that the Muslim position as regards their minority claim has undergone a vast change. The definition of Muslim rights began in 1928 when the United Provinces Muslims made a representation to the Simon Commission. To-day the demands have taken an extreme form as put forward by the All-India Muslim League, with the result that there is little hope of a settlement between the two communities Hindu and Muslim, unless both are willing to compromise.

A great deal may be written on this subject, but a dispassionate consideration will surely lead one to the view that a dangerous situation has been created since the present war started five years ago, and the battle-ground between the two communities has been shifted from one of protection of minority rights to that of re-making the map of India by the creation of Muslim Sovereign States.

The cause of the present Hindu-Muslim tension, I fear, is not correctly understood. My personal opinion is that it is not due to the foreign government that we have had for so many years, nor is it due to the fault of any one community, Hindu or Muslim. It is essentially due to economic, and not entirely political causes.

In fact, it is caused by the struggle for existence which to-day at least, 30 per cent. of the victims are able articulately to demonstrate on behalf of the remaining 70, and these attribute the evils to the monopoly of power and privileges by the Hindus, many of whom took advantage in the early stage of English education to make themselves fit for service under the British Government, and later sought privileges in the expansion of legislative councils through successive stages of reform every thirty years, and, obtained majority at the elections. Muslims, thus, became the minority of growing influence and ventilated their grievances stage by stage as such. The difficulty of defining a minority in India is, that a minority in one province may be a majority in another. Thus, laws for the protection of a minority in one province will not be needed for the protection of the same community in another.

In the second issue of the first volume of my INDIAN AFFAIRS, I published an article from that distinguished Muslim, Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan on the Hindu-Muslim problem. A summary of the views then expressed by him is given here-under:—

“The Hindu-Muslim problem is merely an

aspect of the great problem of the relation of majority and minority communities with which nations in Eastern Europe are familiar. Muslims form 55.3 per cent. of the population in the Punjab and 54 per cent. of the population in Bengal, and have, therefore, a majority in two provinces of British India. It will be admitted, however, that this majority is neither effective nor real. In Bengal their majority is merely nominal. They are, to begin with, hopelessly backward in education. One instance will suffice: Muslim students in Arts Colleges form only about 13 per cent. of the student community; in Secondary education, their position is practically the same. Economically, their condition is thoroughly unsatisfactory. A glance at the census of Bengal for 1921 will show that the Hindus own the bulk of the land and occupy most of the posts in the administration. It is no exaggeration to state that in those spheres which count most in modern times in education, administration, commerce and industry, they are very backward, indeed. Again,

ninety-one per cent. of the Muslims in Bengal are in the grip of the money-lender. They are born in debt, live in debt and die in debt. Hence, though Bengal Muslims enjoy a nominal superiority they are a minority community for all practical purposes. In the Punjab their position is decidedly better, but even in this province, the money-lender has them at his mercy, while in industry, trade and higher education their representation is comparatively small in other provinces of British India. In the United Provinces, they are only 14.28 per cent., in Madras 6.70 per cent., in the C. P. and Berar 4.05 per cent., and in the Bombay Presidency 19.7 per cent., in Behar and Orissa about 11.0 per cent., and in Assam 28.29 per cent. To summarise, they are in a hopeless minority in six provinces, while in the Punjab and Bengal their majority is ineffective."

This distinguished Muslim put forward suggestions for the protection of Muslim interests amongst which may be mentioned separate electorates, 33 per cent. Muslim representation in the

Cabinet and Public Services, adequate safeguard of Urdu language in courts, government departments and educational institutions, and full liberty of religion. These demands moderate though they seem were not accepted fully, with the result that the All-India Muslim League came into existence under the leadership of Mr. Jinnah who is now the champion of the cause of Pakistan, the main bone of contention between the two communities at the present time. What a tragedy it is that Muslim demands of 1930 were not then fully conceded.

A decade has made considerable difference in the moderate Muslim view-point. Ten years ago they declared that they had no desire to play the part of Ulster in India, that they were as eager for the constitutional advance of their motherland as any other community. They were convinced that no constitution would be acceptable to them, until their rights were adequately safeguarded, and now the basic principle of Pakistan, to quote the Muslim League resolution of March 1940 is "that geographically contiguous units should be demarcated into regions which again should be so constituted with necessary territorial re-adjustments that the areas in which the Muslims are a

majority should be grouped as independent Sovereign States."

At that time there was no demand for the partition of India separating certain territories with a preponderance of Muslim population. Pakistan to-day is the political creed based on the assumption that Muslims are a different nationality with a distinct culture, and that they should exercise the right of cutting up India into kingdoms on the basis of religion. That is an outward symptom of the most incurable communal disease that is eating through the vitals of our people. The latest pronouncement of Mr. Jinnah gives an almost incredible interpretation of the Pakistan scheme. He says: "We must now form two great Indian States, the Muslim State of the North with a population of 80 million and the Hindu State of the South with a population of 250 million." He is definitely against a Federal United Democratic State in India.

British writers lay great emphasis on the difference between the two communities which as previously stated have been living side by side for centuries more or less amicably without showing the intolerance that is manifest to-day in India, characterising them as fundamental.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF INDIA, already quoted, says: "The existence of 70 million Muslims in India is the most formidable obstacle in the way of those whose battle-cry is 'India a Nation.'" I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim nor a Christian nor a Parsee by faith having been brought up, though Brahmin by blood and birth, in the Brahmo-Samaj. We are theists in religion believing in one God and were the first fighters amongst the high caste Hindus against caste, idolatry and untouchability. We have, therefore, no bias or prejudice against Muslims, in fact there is a religious sympathy between the Brahmo-Samaj faith and Islam. But Hinduism versus Islam from the religious point of view is undoubtedly the antithesis founded in Indian history. The two cultures are distinct. According to K. Ramanujachari Hinduism includes the most sublime conceptions of Indian sages with regard to God and the soul, as well as debasing superstitions of half-savage tribes living in the forests. It cannot be forgotten by those who take a historical view, that eight centuries of Muslim domination have left an imprint upon the soil of India and many of the Muslim

population to-day are Hindu converts. The fact remains that they belong to two different traditions in regard to the aspect of life generally which are now affecting their political outlook. For one, as pointed out by Schuster is Autocratic and the other Democratic. One is united without horizontal divisions of caste, and the other is divided into hundreds of sects, besides the main four divisions of caste exclusiveness.

With the rise of political consciousness amongst the educated of both the communities, the differences have been accentuated and are grounded on economic factors. The fear amongst the Muslims, however powerful a minority they may be in a representative democratic constitution, is that in a Hindu-Raj Muslim interests will be sacrificed. Mr. Jinnah, recently said in these words : "A Federal United Democratic State would place the Muslim minority at the mercy of the Hindu majority." Is this altogether groundless ? Unless confidence is restored between two communities by a process of give-and-take in the future reconstruction of India as a whole, there is very little prospect that by an internal process without external pressure the two communities will be able to settle their present differences.

## CHAPTER IV

### OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

It is admitted on all sides that our educational system is defective. I myself am a product of an Indian university, having taken its highest degree just half a century ago after passing through the Intermediate stages with first-class honours. I, therefore, cannot be ungrateful to my Alma Mater for all that I owe to her, yet at the same time, having had the opportunity of residence in Oxford later, and of administering the department of Education in three state governments besides, and also of visiting some of the famous universities of Europe and America during my world-wide travels, I may claim some knowledge of the methods and system of education in more advanced countries, and whatever, therefore, I may point out as our deficiencies in India will be based on a personal comparison.

In his well-known book *EDUCATION OF INDIA*, Mr. Mahew emphasises on the general conclusion he arrived at, that education in India

has done far less for Indian culture than for the material and political progress of the country. I do not propose to go into the history of education from the early part of the 19th century to the famous Despatch of Sir Charles Wood, later Lord Halifax, the then Secretary of State for India, in 1854, who laid the foundation of English education and paved the way for the establishment of English universities. The combat between those who were in favour of the former as against Sanskrit learning came to an end with this paper which gave definite directions to the East Indian Company and encouraged the English education on certain definite terms of reference. The decision to establish English as the medium of instruction for all higher kinds of education, that is, for all but purely elementary schools, was not based on cultural aims as Mr. Mahew points out, but on a purely educational question of methods. Mr. Mahew also gives his opinion to the effect that the use of English as a means of instruction and the inability of government to help the vernaculars have widened the gulf that separates the intelligentsia of India from the masses. But in India education was to permeate the masses from above and the figures representing the numbers at each

stage of education were characterised by Mr. Mahew as suggesting a system uncomfortably like an inverted pyramid. Two decades ago, according to census statistics, 8.2 of the population over five years were literate, and out of every 100 men only 14, and out of 100 women only 2 were literate.

This English view-point naturally leads us to consider how India as a whole has fared under our educational system, she has taken nearly a century to build up. Let us take university education to begin with. In the middle of the nineteenth century there were three universities established in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and now we have eighteen universities all over India turning out hundreds of graduates every year qualified in various faculties. The present Maharaja of Mysore a short while ago, said :.....“They have now 137,000 students in the 18 universities, but the stream of the university education is rushing down to threaten to overflow the banks and to spread itself far and wide into pools of unemployment.”

In 1910 as Dewan of Cochin I published an exhaustive note on the education in the State after reviewing the progress made in this part of India where literacy was at its highest figure,

and in this note I made the following observations: "Education has acquired in this country a marketable value, for university degrees have become pass-ports for Government service. This, more than anything else, is undoubtedly the cause of the several defects that have been pointed out from time to time in the educational system that is at present in vogue. But so long as the State insists on the passes in certain public examinations as indispensable, and makes them the pass-ports for government service, the tendency must be to attach undue importance to degrees etc., and boys could have no other ambition than to secure a pass with a view to command a certain price in the market." The policy, I then followed, was to start a departmental entrance examination for public service and to do away with the rules relating to the general educational qualifications of candidates. I also encouraged for the first time in the State, Industrial and Agricultural education and sanctioned scholarships for technical studies outside the State as a measure of reform to develop the indigenous system of recruitment for administrative posts which were then held for the most part by outsiders. At the third annual industrial and agricultural exhibition in opening

it I reviewed the agricultural and industrial conditions of Cochin and announced the establishment of a Central Training School to get an adequate supply of teachers to take charge of the net-work of industrial and technical schools throughout the State, and in this connection I laid down the policy in the following words : "The Durbar after mature consideration was convinced of the necessity, having regard to the present condition of the various industries of the State, of laying down a policy of industrial development which will comprise liberal encouragement to existing or intended organisations, demonstrations of new methods and appliances, and spread of industrial education, but which will totally exclude from all Government operations and schemes any spirit of interference or unfair competition with trade." This was in December 1910. I quote this bit of Cochin history to show what was done in the State to develop education for the purpose of utilising its resources and also of training people to take part, not only in industry and commerce but also in administration; and how Cochin has prospered since.

University education has been the subject of many investigations, one of the most impor-

tant of which was the Sadler Commission. I will not go into details of all the controversy that has been raised in this country regarding university education, but a few facts can very well be stated as being beyond dispute. We have in this country a very large number of unemployed graduates who cannot earn a decent livelihood after their university careers. The examination system has been fruitful by many evils and I for one in my young days was a victim to it. I burnt the midnight oil ruining my health by over-study and cramming which undoubtedly put me in a higher place in the results so far as they go, and it was not till I went to England that I discovered what little importance is attached to examinations and to degrees, and how the students at Oxford and Cambridge went about their studies to qualify themselves for the various faculties they chose to adopt. We have in India such a phrase as a failed B. A. and many students who go for these examinations fail year after year. I personally know of a case during my service, of an unfortunate candidate for a Government job who considered it a good point to urge that he had appeared for the Matric eleven times. India has no doubt produced distinguished scholars, and eminent

scientists in the various branches of learning and the equipment of our colleges and universities in various parts of India, and the staff of lecturers and professors are such that any country may feel proud of them. But, it is a standing grievance that the educational service is not well paid and judging from the results, the work of this band of workers, who devote the best part of their lives to train up young men, is generally weighed down with a sense of frustration in their minds, except when they find a brilliant youth reaching a place or rank of honour amongst his contemporaries by showing signs of great ability, if not genius. There has also been a tendency or fashion in recent years to found many new universities, mainly to satisfy regional demands and provincial sentiments.

Here is an extract from a recent article of Mr. P. Joshi in the 20th Century Magazine on the "Multiplication of the Universities" which is self-explanatory.

"Our educational progress has been relentlessly pursued by many maladies. The diversity of their origin is a study by itself but one of the basic diseases that dwarfed its progress was the cancer of slavish imitation of accepted

patterns and ideologies. It will do no good to discuss and resuscitate the now deservedly forgotten controversies which went to shape the educational policies from time to time. No one will now deny the immense widening of the horizon which the British connection brought to India and the tremendous shaking that it administered to the thought-processes and social behaviour of our country but that had to come. The rising tide of western civilisation and culture could not have been shut out from us, as it could not be kept out from several countries in the world. The outlook of the Indian people would have been just as much revolutionised as those of the many oriental and American people.

"In this assimilation of occidental culture and learning, the one effect which has proved decisive in many ways was the acceptance of the British examples as the standard of the highest achievement. The glamour gradually wore off many things, but it still pervades our examination of many problems, partly because our receptiveness, as also inquisitiveness, have been greatly paralysed by a loss of confidence in our potentialities, and a con-

sequent dislike of adventure and reluctance to leave the beaten tracks and deadened habits ; and partly because our sense of inferiority either denied us a true appreciation of the valuable contribution made by certain other nations or engendered in us an idolatrous admiration of those systems. The result has been that we have never been able to get rid of the shell which has formed itself round our national life. Though genuinely desirous of achieving a transmutation of the educational process, we are finding that we are merely renaming things and continuing those very outworn modes against which we set our energies.

"Nowhere has this come out so prominently as in the development of the system of university education. The first Indian universities were started at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in the year 1857, and since then the universities have been on the increase. Calcutta has developed and divided and subdivided itself into nine universities, exemplifying all manners of forms, from teaching to affiliating, and from unitary to federal types. Madras can claim six daughters. Bombay,

so long childless, threatens to go into labours. We do not know whether this octogenarian example may not provide excellent encouragement to those still in their adolescence. If ever the motto of one of our universities came out true, it has done in this case,—Quot rami totarboris, as many branches, so many trees. It is the monotony of a senseless reproduction, which has brought a quantitative improvement, but certainly no qualitative refinement, though I grant not much of degeneration, either."

Comments are superfluous. Whether the standard of education has been raised in the universities or lowered since I was a student in the Presidency College, Calcutta, fifty years ago, there are educational experts who may answer the question with some doubt. But the standard amongst those who aim at proficiency in some special branch of knowledge with a view to secure distinction or conduct further research, is certainly much higher to-day than in the past. The number of young men unemployed, after having gone through their University course is still on the increase. For a single job advertised there are hundreds and hundreds of applications. Quali-

fying courses for the legal professions are far more crowded and numerous than ever. Technical and other kinds of specialised education has received little attention. Higher forms of industrial and economic training have also been neglected.

Another defect is that the educational system in India to-day is controlled by the policy of centralisation by the Government of India, which thought fit to appoint an Educational adviser to co-ordinate University activities throughout the country. There is, besides, a Minister of Education in the whole of India; although it is admitted that the problems of education in one province are not those of others, just as the climate and economic conditions vary. The Educational Commissioner, Mr. J. Sargent, some time ago, condemning the present education system in a speech at Srinagar said : "The present education system in India required a complete overhaul. It was in theory, a platitude, but in practice a truth nowhere more generally ignored than in India, that a soundly conceived system of popular education ought to satisfy both the cultural and economic needs of the country whose interest it intended to promote."

To put it briefly, the whole system of uni-

versity education requires re-modelling with the examples that are before us from the other countries. There should be greater co-ordination between the universities and the larger organisations of industries as there is in America and also in Great Britain, where I found that selected students were ear marked for employment in industrial concerns. In the Harvard University, for example, such was the case, and in the Guiness Factory in Dublin in Ireland, and England, I found that most of the young men recruited in the Engineering and Supervising Staff were men from Oxford. By these means, unemployment may to some extent decrease. At all events, there will be some prospect opened up for distinguished students of the universities for special work, and their fate will not be hung up in the balance without a definite career before them.

Briefly speaking, almost all the sign-posts of academic learning lead to the same City—a City of Unemployment, and few only are diverted to specialised centres of vocational and technical centres of training with the aid of the scheme of scholarships to foreign countries to learn special industries. That our Indian universities are not

as popular as they should be amongst the student-going population aiming at academic degrees, is evident from the fact that, a British or any other foreign degree is coveted by the average student seeking a career, but without scholarships how many can go outside India, and yet, during the past fifty years, the number of Indian youths going to England alone for education has increased from 300 to 3,000. Much money goes out of the country by this measure, and it was once estimated that over one crore of rupees per annum is spent on Indian students in Great Britain. Why should not India be self-supporting for general education and send out young Indians abroad for special studies?

Higher training of young men is insufficient in India to give that mental equipment necessary for well-chosen careers in Commerce, Industry, Engineering, Applied Science etc. The average mental calibre of a passed university student is poor. There is no incentive to take up technical and vocational courses owing to the, limited opportunities and chances at present presenting themselves for useful careers. The only redeeming feature is that university education through the medium of English has brought about a common

bond between the people of different provinces in India who speak different languages, and all political education and experience must be regarded as the outcome of our university teaching.

Turning now to High Schools the first observation to be made is that they being Preparatory Schools for candidates who seek university education, their efficiency leaves much to be desired. A mere pass in the S.L.C. or Matriculation is not really sufficient to enable a student to enter the portals of the universities, and professors and lecturers will agree with me that the material they have to handle is not always suitable to take up university courses. How is this to be remedied, is a matter of educationists to decide. Personally, I would advocate an Entrance Examination for each faculty chosen, and although there will be heart-burning on the part of those rejected, the quality and not the quantity will be appreciably improved and assimilation of knowledge will be quicker and more fruitful. High School education itself also requires over-hauling to provide a suitable scheme of bifurcation between literary and the practical side of higher education in the universities. The teachers, employed in the High Schools being the product of our universi-

ties as constituted to-day, cannot all be regarded fit to take up the education of students in the High School standards; as their training prospects and other allied matters have to be gone into with greater detail than at present. There is too much over-crowding in schools in India, and the limit of students in the classes has to be more strictly enforced. If there is proper system of tutorial attention paid by teachers, they will have individual attention and provided with periodical progress reports more important than examination results.

As regards Primary and Middle School education, there is no doubt that these should be made free throughout the land. It is sad to think that elementary education is not even to-day, after Gokhale's fight for it in Curzon's time, not free and compulsory throughout. Vocational courses are not attached to Village Elementary and Middle Schools.

As regards education of girls, I have always held the opinion that the curriculum of women's education including those of girls from the primary stages should be elastic and specially suited for them, and not standardised for both boys and girls. The teachers for Girls' Schools have to

be specially selected. The training arrangements in this country are not always adequate to provide a sufficient flow of teachers for both boys' and girls' schools in the Primary and Middle School grades. A higher scale of pay should be prescribed for women teachers. Can it be denied that our women teachers have had little encouragement so far, except in the higher grades?

In my education note of Cochin published more than 35 years ago, which was the basis of the Education Code that still remains in force in the State, and is about to be revised, many radical reforms, were introduced, one of the most important of which was the improvement in the scale of pay of teachers, establishment of training schools for them and introducing a system of licensing untrained teachers for a limited period, giving half grants for teachers trained in all aided schools, and providing a suitable curriculum for girls, including vocational training. I added : "Girls who do not propose to go beyond the Lower Secondary standard need not follow the curriculum prescribed for boys, and special attention should be paid to give instructions through the medium of vernaculars in certain subjects, such as Hygiene, Domestic Economy and

Elementary Science". There are many weak points in our educational system in the lower grades still noticeable in the various British provinces, and no doubt educationists are busily engaged in studying them and finding out remedies. Linking up the whole education system from the primary to the highest standards is a vital problem. The policy of education for the country as a whole should have specified objects, both from the cultural and utilitarian point of view. Agricultural education has to be fostered through the educational organisations of each tract of country, different from each other owing to seasonal and other agricultural conditions.

One of the most important reforms introduced in Cochin, was to attach greater importance to vernacular education and the division of schools into vernacular and Anglo-vernacular, to provide for a sound English teaching to the Anglo-vernacular by trained teachers who can really teach English, for it was held that bad teaching of English produced results which really cut at the very root of sound educational policy. Bad English is a poor equipment for students entering High Schools and Colleges. I know of University graduates who cannot write a decent

letter in English without spelling and grammatical mistakes. Are they not only adding to the ranks of the unemployed? In elementary and middle schools we have to encourage teaching as far as possible through the medium of the vernaculars. We have to foster the compilation of suitable text-books, and if education is to be nationalised, whether there be a common language in India for all parts such as Hindi, or whether we maintain the main languages for the growth of each province according to its natural bent and tradition, there is no reason why the future educational system should not be founded on the provincial languages which are spoken by no less than forty to fifty million of the population of India in each case.

It is a question whether any, if not all these drawbacks have been overcome. There is also another side to the question. Do we want higher education for women to spread itself at a fast rate in this country, or do we not require an educational system to suit the needs and aspirations of Indian women in every community, caste or creed. The opening up of careers for women in this country is slow, but sure to be accelerated. Marriage problems also are becoming involved owing

to the inter-change of social intercourse between boys and girls of different provinces through the spread of English education. It is my firm conviction that the higher training for women should be based on a principle which will enable them to take part in the social and political work of every description in the country whether married or unmarried, whether Hindu or Muslim, Christian or Parsi. There is a great lack of such workers throughout India and as political consciousness grows amongst all classes, women will surely take greater part in public life. Their future is a matter of grave concern for educationists who must pay special attention to the role Indian women must play in the march of progress to bring India to a higher place and higher status amongst the nations of the world.

I have, in my lectures abroad, advocated the inter-change of professors amongst the universities of the world. The growth of India's nationhood as time goes on will be not merely determined by Indian ideals, but by universal ideals of citizenship, culture and scientific attribute of mind which only will enable the people of all countries to have a desire to obtain the best from each other and also give the best. There is nothing

so effective towards broadening the vision of those engaged in education as world contacts, and I have personally seen during my travels efforts made by the authorities engaged in education. Organising groups of students, visiting other countries to learn what was being done there for the school and university-going population will help. There is a great lack of opportunities in India to develop the scheme for the benefit of all communities. University budgets as well as the budget of Education departments have to find funds for these purposes, or else education will take a narrow path, specially in India where there is a distinct tendency towards reaction based on the exclusive and intolerant growth of provincial nationalism.

## CHAPTER V

### ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL MISFITS

#### (a) *Railways, Shipping and Road Communications*

Extensive railway travelling in India does not give a favourable impression of transport facilities attained in this country. The total route mileage has hardly increased during the past decade. It was about 41,000 in 1928-29 and it was just about the same in 1937-38.

The gross Railway earnings show considerable variation and these are no doubt attributable to seasonal conditions and general economic variations in prices and production. The net earnings of railways as compared with the gross in the year for which statistics are available in the Statistical Abstract, are 37 crores, and the percentage of the net working expenses to the gross earnings is as high as 64.73. The number of third-class passengers who contribute largely to the earnings has steadily risen but that does not show that the facilities for these travellers have been augmented by

the railway administration to any appreciable extent.

Railways in India have hardly improved in the provision of travelling facilities for the general public, except that they have made special arrangements for refreshment-rooms in the railway stations for different communities. First or second-class Indian passengers, who do not eat European food, are not provided with refreshment cars. The crowding of the third-class passengers, the insanitation of railway carriages and bath-rooms and the inability of most of the trains to carry all the passengers waiting on the platforms are common features of railway travelling in India. The over-crowding problem has increased to such an extent that the protest of the people has now taken the shape of challenging the railway administration and pulling the alarm-cord to invite prosecution.

The rolling-stock including Locomotives, Passenger Carriages etc., again by comparison give disappointing results for there is no evidence to show that the expenditure has increased. The number of Locomotives and Coaching Vehicles, in fact, shows decrease. If the railway administration had been progressive these results as judged from the statistics should be certainly different.

The pay of the subordinate Indian staff has, I am sure, not been appreciably raised during the past decade specially amongst the Station Masters, Drivers, Guards,—leave alone Pointsmen, Signallers, Watchmen etc. The present unsatisfactory condition of the Indian Railways both from the point of view of their out-of-date character, want of facilities for the bulk of the travelling public and inadequate remuneration paid to the railway staff, cannot be remedied unless there is a whole-sale nationalisation of railways under the Central Government department of Communications. The whole constitution of the Railway Board has to be considerably liberalised to bring in the interested Indian element into its membership.

There is yet another defect in the railway administration of India, viz., the supply of waggons for goods-traffic. Restriction of goods-traffic is frequently caused by the refusal of railway authorities to supply waggons, probably due to inadequate rolling-stock. Many representations are made by the merchants to Divisional Superintendents of Railways through the Chamber of Commerce but without effect. It is no use developing industries or encouraging the growth of industrial and

commercial crops in this country if the railway administration is unable to cope with the increased goods-traffic. The shortage of goods-waggons has also resulted in bribery and corruption.

Generally speaking, railway transport has in the past benefited those merchants who hold the export of agricultural produce in their hands, and these up till now are in the Clearing Houses for shipment in the ports of Calcutta, Karachi, Bombay and Madras, for the most part British. Without proper co-ordination of railway and road transport and harbour facilities, even the coastal trade from Calcutta right round Cape Comorin to Karachi cannot develop in the interests of production. In all these three-fold directions, railways, shipping and road transport, opportunities are unlimited in India, but the progress has been so far limited.

The Shipping statistics published in the last edition of the Statistical Abstract prove interesting reading. The total number of country vessels has increased during the past ten years, from 622 only to 804, with a corresponding tonnage increase of 51,000 to 61,000. Here again, we see that the shipping industry in India is for the most part in the hands of British Companies, but there is no

harm in this so long as it is sufficiently progressive and gives ample room for development of Indian shipping. Only recently nine Indian Shipping Companies made a representation to the Government of India against discrimination in favour of British Shipping Companies. There is little attention paid to the development of Sea Board Trade in India by the construction of harbours, and there is no co-ordination of harbour development throughout India. It took more than thirty years for the Cochin Harbour to come into being, and it is ridiculous to note that there are only eight principal ports in the whole of India. If one takes a coastal vessel and travels right round the whole Indian sea-board from Calcutta via the East Coast to Tuticorin and round the West via Mangalore, Bombay and Karachi, one will find that there is hardly any progress in the subordinate ports, either by way of providing additional facilities, or encouraging commerce. The development of shipping in India as seen from the Statistical Abstract discloses the fact, that including eight major ports, the total amount of tonnage of, say, steam and sailing vessels that enters and clears at the ports of British India, shows a ridiculously small increase, from 5,767 to 7,167 in ten years.

It is surprising also to know that the ships built at Indian Ports varied during the past ten years, from 34 to 41 and in some years has gone down to 7 and 8. How different would the Defence of India be in this fourth year of war if there were more harbours, more ship-building and greater encouragement given to the Indian shipping industry?

I will now pass on to Communications. Recently, Mr. R. H. Parker, addressing a meeting of the Indian Roads and Transport development in Bombay, made some observations. I give an extract from his speech :

“Considering the size of India, the road transport available is negligible owing to the inadequacy of road system. Difficulties confronting road transport were recognised by the Transport Advisory Council at their fifth session in Simla last month when they recommended for Government’s consideration the removal of some of the handicaps to road progress. While it is hoped that their recommendations will receive the fullest consideration of the authorities concerned, it is unfortunate that the Transport Advisory official representatives, of those directly interested in roads whose

presence would help to solve problems and encourage an enlightened application of restrictions to road transport by Regional and Provincial Transport Authorities, take little or no interest."

The road administration for the most part being in the hands of the local boards in the different presidencies, it cannot be said that during the past ten or twelve years roads have generally improved in spite of experience gained. On the other hand, there has been a great deal of competition between the roads and railways and the co-ordination as already stated in the previous section has yet to come specially with the advent of the Road Motor Bus. We have in India too many advisory councils and committees, reports and meetings. What is wrong in India to-day is that reforms, if any, are only put down on paper and practical action is delayed.

At the present moment when we are at war, the problem of road transport in India is of the utmost importance and through road communications, between Province and Province, State and State as in the United States of America, has sooner or later to be seriously undertaken. India must find capital for this expenditure and not expect

to meet it from Revenue alone. It would be interesting to record here that the total length of all roads in British India in 1936-37 was 62,299 miles metalled and 231,882 miles unmetalled. It is sad to relate that during the past ten years figures show little or no improvement. The maintenance authorities are the Public Works Department, Municipalities, District and Local Boards. There is hardly any co-ordination between the three and each is a water-tight compartment by itself. For a great country like India, the development of Road communications has been lamentably slow and one could easily imagine what a great obstacle there is to raising the economic conditions of the people in rural parts, and how it is hampered by the lack of road facilities which they suffer under, specially for the transport of agricultural produce from the interior to markets and to railway centres. The very large mileage of earth-roads and cart-tracks do not come under the above review. The load, carried by the bullock-carts, and there are 8 million such carts in India, is ever on the increase.

There is another fundamental factor which works as a constant handicap against the economic prosperity of the people. The old bullock-cart,

with its iron tyres, still retains its supreme position for the carriage of agricultural produce from the village to the market-place and from one centre of collection to another according to the conditions of marketing, fluctuations in prices and the manœuvring by the merchants of holding up or selling according to such fluctuations. The work of the village black-smith is chiefly responsible for repairing these carts, cart-wheels and tyres, and in cattle markets the most important transaction is buying and selling draught bulls. If economic statistics are taken in any track which grows paying crops such as chillies, and ground-nuts, sugar-cane etc., it will be found that these carts do most of the transport work from villages to railway stations from which the produce is taken to central places of distribution. Even minerals are transported by carts to railway stations, but the supply of carts is unable to cope with the demand.

Co-ordination of railway and road transport is a vital problem in India, and if large capital is necessary, our industrialists can surely provide it. Industries must start in rural parts which are centres of production of raw materials and mineral wealth. The old fashioned bullock-cart must give

place to mechanical transport and this means, good metal roads and many of them all over the country. The planting industry in different parts of India by their spirit of self-help succeeded in solving the transport problem for themselves, but they built roads out of their capital wherever necessary without government subsidy.

Only the other day, Sir Kenneth Mitchell, Controller of Road Transport, Government of India, addressing the 8th session of the Indian Roads Congress said : . . . . .

"To generalise, it is fair to say that village roads and the humbler district roads have not only not progressed, but have deteriorated with the increasing traffic of more money crops, more people and more travel arising from security and the general awakening.

"There are hundreds, probably thousands of large villages at some distance from any roads supposedly maintained by public authority, and many miles from any modern road, and there is, I fear, general neglect of the link between the village and the public road.

"Let us take a peep into the future of India, say, 50 years ahead. What is it we hope for? Is

it not a country of better fed, better clothed, better educated, happier people working in thriving industries with extensive overseas markets and in scientific farming, probably with larger holdings and greater production. Has this picture any place in it for the present primitive village and district road, deep in dust or mud, with its tolling overstrained cattle, and the creaking, inefficient cart? Definitely not, and if you cannot conceive of these roads being still as they are 50 years hence, then why not start on them now? Indeed, their condition is a serious obstacle to the achievement of the rest of the picture.

"The present general condition of district roads seemed to be a reproach to their generation, and a barrier to every other plan of rural uplift or improvement."

#### (b) *Impediments to Industrial Progress*

There has been a cry in India since the present War started that industries on an organised basis should be started all over the country apart from our requirements of war supplies. As one who has returned to India after several years of absence, I could not help being struck by the increasing

number of advertisements in all papers, Indian and British, pushing the sale of British manufactured goods in this country. This is a sad commentary on our industrialists who have yet to develop manufacture of most of the imported articles. It is a truism to say that most of our requirements can be met in this country through its abundance of raw materials. In spite of the great Swadeshi Movement which followed the movements of boycott of British goods after the partition of Bengal, a casual visitor to an Indian bazaar would be struck by the display of every kind of foreign manufactured goods even in the petty shops. Does not this show that the foreign merchants have made a tremendous thrust into the purchasing power of the country and distributed wholesale as well as retail every kind of article, and have discovered that India is the biggest market in the world for their goods? Demands of the people under toilet requisites, such as soap, powder, buttons, dress material, shoes, stockings, scents, toothpastes, and dentrifices of all kinds have increased enormously, and the foreign producer has caught hold of the trade. In Indian bazaars foreign goods predominate in the supplies of all shops in every small town. How could such articles be imported and sold at

a price within reach of the average consumer.

If one sees the advertisements in the daily papers one is surprised at the subtle cunning of the advertisers who put before the public pretty Indian women's faces to popularise their goods. When a hawker comes round to sell his stuff he always puts forward the plea that certain goods of his are English, in spite of the fact, that under some categories, India is producing through its mills and factories a large variety of goods of a very good quality. What is wrong with India, is, that even now the people favour foreign manufactured goods or in other words, the European article, because it is fashionable. The efforts made by the Bengal Chemical Works to popularise all that they now manufacture in the pharmaceutical industry are too well known to need recapitulation. The late Dr. P. C. Ray himself stated they had to face the prejudices and the disinclination of the purchasing public against Indian manufactured articles. The consumer, however, cannot be blamed if he finds the imported articles cheaper. If the country-made goods are sold on a profiteering basis our manufacturers are surely cutting their own throats, but if the cost of production makes them sell at higher rates why not ask for subsidies till the industries are well

established, granting that the management is efficient. This was the policy followed by the commerce department of the Free State of Ireland.

Sir B. Stevens, the Australian Representative of the Eastern Group Council, in his last address at the convocation of the Mysore University 2 years ago, referring to the economic future of India said. "India was on the verge of great and far-reaching industrialisation." The *Hindu* demurred to this view and made the following comments :—

"The Eastern Group Council, about which Sir Bertram is so enthusiastic, may have achieved a record of sorts in co-operative enterprise among neighbouring members of the Commonwealth, or as we have to view it, the Empire. But it is idle to contend that what India's representative therein does is, of the same significance to India as Sir Bertram Stevens' work is to Australia. The subject countries have been told that their representatives on the council are not to act as though they were there to promote the interests of their industries.

If Australia were told that she should concentrate only on wheat and meat and should not engage herself in ship-building or aeroplane manufacture, on such flimsy grounds as those put before India,

will she tolerate it? None need pause for an answer; the replies of Canada and Australia to such suggestions are now on record for anybody to see, and these Dominions did well in brushing aside with contempt the attempts of self-seeking outside vested interests to thwart their progress. If these interests which have succeeded in respect of India had their war in regard to Australia and Canada, those Dominions would have been in the same pitiable condition as India is. Is it strange that India should feel that were she a self-governing Dominion, she would have secured dollar resources, machine-tools, shipping space, technicians everything, in fact, the refusal of which to her now impedes the growth of her industries?"

The Government of Britain have stinted nothing to help her industrialists and entrepreneurs in the way of enabling them to make the utmost use of the nation's material resources and man-power and this is natural. They have promoted two gigantic corporations for the purpose. These twin pillars of British overseas trade under war conditions are the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation and the English and Scottish Corporation as the London "News Chronicle" recently pointed out "continue to do excellent work and

steadily to expand the scope of their activities."

Sir Charles Innes, Chairman of the National Bank of India, said at one of the recent annual meetings in London that the development of Indian industries would affect the prosperity of England. Is this not a candid British confession? What is then the remedy for India? Complete control of industries and commerce both at the centre and in the provinces by Indian representatives who would be responsible to the Legislature and to public opinion. We shall no doubt, blunder and squander, but no nation can reach a standard of perfection in these matters without committing some mistakes and without gaining experience, through long and tedious years. We have lost much time and it is still not too late to commence with all the vigour that we may command, husbanding our central resources and, with genuine co-operation amongst our peoples, have a Five or Ten-Year Plan to begin with for the industrialisation of the country on a permanent basis; and in this, I am in hearty sympathy with the great movement that is being led by that old veteran champion of industries, Sir M. Visveswaraiya, as Chairman of the All-India Manufacturers' Association.

A great deal has been written in recent years on the subject of the economic progress of India and the need for further development in the field of agricultural industries and commerce and education. Detailed studies have also been conducted by eminent scholars in various fields of investigations. In spite of much agitation and constructive work amongst our industrial leaders, India has to face much opposition of vested interests. A pamphlet was issued about two years ago by the British Ministry of Information entitled, TALKING POINTS ON INDIA. It transpired that the pamphlet was published by a British Ministry without reference to the Secretary of State for India who, no doubt, had to withdraw it from circulation owing to adverse press criticism. In this pamphlet, statements were made pleading excuses for want of progress in several directions for nation-building. The "New Statesman" of London commenting on this document, said: "This compilation of half-truths and glaring omission should be suppressed and with apologies to the intelligence of the nation." I give an extract.

*Main principles to be kept in mind :—*

1. Say nothing about the intentions of His'

Majesty's Government beyond the general aim towards "Dominion Status." The difference is the pace of progress. His Majesty's Government does not want to strain the engine by accelerating the pace.

2. The backwardness of Indian agriculture is due to many reasons : poverty and ignorance of the people; the increase of population.

3. The Muslim system is theoretically democratic; the Hindu caste system essentially opposed to democracy.

4. The size of the country and the difficulty of communications make it impossible to provide hospitals within easy reach.

5. Indian army is only recruited from certain 'martial races.' All officers formerly British. There is no difficulty of getting Indian officers.

6. Average income of an Indian is Rs. 50/- per head, per annum. 80% of the population are agriculturists and do not value education. Religious prejudices preclude providing one school in a village of all classes. Dominion Status cannot be granted at once, for defence and foreign relations are the difficulties. "Labour conditions in India are good."

The fundamental factor underlying all out-

ward manifestations of political unrest in India to-day is specially, if not wholly, economic. And in this, India is no exception; practically the same situation prevails in most countries of the world, even if the root cause be different.

In India, a country purely agricultural, it is not merely the fashion to cry for industrial progress; it is a natural and perfectly legitimate desire to be able to satisfy from her own abundant raw materials, at least some of her demands for manufactured goods. These, until recently, have been supplied by foreign countries with aid of native raw materials exported in very large quantities, to be imported again in the shape of finished products. It is no doubt a vexed question as to whether India should restrict her export trade absolutely or even partially, to set apart a fair portion of her agricultural and natural raw meterials for the development of all industries; there are many who consider it to be a suicidal policy to restrict India's export trade merely on sentimental and political grounds, without aiming at measures which would create organisations for the utilisation of her raw materials in the country itself. Industries do grow through artificial stimulus, but this presupposes in the first instance, a very high standard of educa-

tion amongst the majority of the people and also a complete mastery over the means and methods of the distribution of manufactured goods overseas.

In India, the people being mostly illiterate and pursuing agriculture as their vocation, the growth of industries must necessarily be slow, and while the British economic relations with India continue according to present standards, India cannot have control over her railways or shipping, upon which the distribution of her manufactured goods entirely depends. There are some, however, who believe that it is essential for the future welfare of the masses and general rise in the standard of living, that her people should be able to supply their own needs, not luxury articles, but such articles as clothing, domestic necessaries and other goods, many of which are now imported from foreign countries. To enable her to do this, they contend the State must restrict imports judicially, and also subsidise those industries for which she has an abundant scope.

From an abstract point of view, this argument seems sound, but in its practical application to the present conditions in India, it is necessary to conduct extensive research not only in the field of village

economy, but also in the field of production and distribution of raw materials. These can be classified under two heads:—(1) Agricultural products; (2) Mineral and other products which are found in abundance in all parts of India.

Under agricultural products, India exports cotton, jute, oil-seeds, tea, rubber, and coffee, rice and cereals in very large quantities. She has exported very large quantities of manganese and other minerals in the past, but still now there has not been sufficient scope to utilise these, for the purpose of manufacture. She also exports some miscellaneous raw materials, such as raw hides and skins, but they are decreasing in proportion to the growth of the tanning industry in different parts of India. If, therefore, any restriction is to be imposed on products, not food products, such restriction must be determined with reference to the ability of Indian industries to utilise them.

Admittedly Indian industries and industrial organisations have not yet been specialised to the extent that she can make use of whole of her output under natural resources. Even if a part of her natural resources were thus utilised, the question arises, who is to determine the price, and whether the marketing board, to be established by

Government, or open competition should be the determining agency. If it be the marketing board, established by the Ministry of Industries and Commerce, the task would be extremely difficult. For while, on one hand, industrialists would require their raw materials at the cheapest possible rate, so as to enable the industries at the initial stages to prosper, at any rate to fight against foreign competition, the producers will be considerably prejudiced if they have to sell a part of their products to Indian manufacturers at a rate less than the market rate, leaving no margin of profit. Supposing, for argument's sake, as a protection to the producers, the industries are subsidised and the State pays for the difference, after all, it is the tax-payer that has to pay for it and indirectly, the consumer. So the whole problem becomes very involved.

Looking at it from another point of view India has prospered and the balance of trade has been in her favour, so far as exports are concerned for many years, and if the agriculturists are unable to find that they can sell in the foreign market, to foreign countries sufficient quantities at a fair rate, then the vast multitude of Indians fail to get a living wage for their labour. One would

ask what is a fair rate. Naturally that depends on competition. Indian raw materials are very valuable to *foreign countries*; they are obtained and placed upon the market with cheap labour as compared to European countries, and competitive prices will help the Indian producers very largely. If, on the other hand, Imperial preference is to be followed as a principle, and the Indian persuaded to come within the policy in the interests of the British Empire as a whole, then her raw materials have to be placed in the hand of British manufacturers in preference to those of foreign countries.

The discrimination will be possible when tariff is imposed for export of these raw materials to foreign countries, and greater facilities are given to the manufacturing firms in Britain, Canada, and Australia, so that the healthy competition which always fixes a fair rate will be lacking. In either case the sufferer is the Indian peasant or the Indian businessman who deals with raw materials like minerals, hides and skins. Thus the solution becomes almost impossible. India cannot be expected at the present stage of her political and industrial evolution to take a philanthropic view, but India has to pay a price for

certain advantages and benefits which the British connection undoubtedly gives her; and what that price is and how it is to be determined without sacrificing her own permanent national interests, is the problem Indian statesmen and administrators have to solve.

The nature of India's economic development during the past years including the years of wars since 1939 can be summarised briefly thus : There is a triangular contest between industries, agriculture, and the national exchequer, for national finance depends on import duties as the most important source of revenue. India is dependent also on foreign markets so far as her agricultural produce is concerned. Industrial progress, which has followed the policy of discriminating protection, has not been commensurate with the increased cost of production. Lastly, India is largely dependent on foreign countries for the supply of machinery, without which, new industries or further expansion of existing ones will be impossible.

Lastly, we must not forget that 11-12th of the Indian population live in rural districts, so while India still remains essentially an agricultural country, it is hard to believe that according to the

figures of the Commerce Department, she is now one of the eight largest industrial countries in the world. With the limitations of the present situation, though this is remarkable, it only proves what is still possible with gradual increase in the standard of living, increase of agricultural production. She can transform her raw product exports into exports of manufactured goods while satisfying all her requirements under Steel, Cement, Chemicals, Paper, Glass, Matches, Clothing etc.

So far back as 1910, opening the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibitions in Cochin, I, as Diwan indicated the policy of the Government in the following words: "Agriculture will have to remain as the chief industry of the bulk of the population of this country, and there is no fear that industrialisation will develop to any great extent as in Western countries so as to divorce the agriculturists from the land. Agriculture and Industry should, therefore, receive State encouragement, not as rival movements but as parallel and inter-dependent to each other." If industrial education and agricultural training side by side with tapping the country's resources had been developed on the lines of the Cochin Government policy initiated in 1910, India's economic position would surely

have been brighter.

We have, of course, in India eminent men who, in the past have preached the opposite doctrine and amongst whom, the famous is no doubt Mahatma Gandhi. His campaign against machine-made goods of all kinds, and his striking endeavour to introduce the ancient spinning-wheel into every Indian household, is too well known. Before that, the great Bengal leader, C. R. Dass said: "We must remember for ever that this industrialism never was and never will be art and part of our nature. If we seek to establish industrialism in our land, we shall be laying down with our hands the road to our destruction. Mills and factories—like some gigantic monster—will crush out the little life that still feebly pulsates in our veins, and we shall whirl round with their huge wheels and be like some dead and soulless machine ourselves."

Be that as it may, the actual and potential wealth of India must gradually be utilised for industrial development, and the economic uplift of the people at large, and improve their standard of living. In this progressive movement there is no force in the world except foreign domination that can be any obstacle. These questions can be

dealt with from a purely business point of view and not politically, as is often the case in India. All business interests of the country and industrialists will undoubtedly combine with a spirit of co-operation and not rivalry of foreign merchants, including British, to bring about an industrial renascence in spite of the conservative influences that are still at work in the minds of the people in the country.

### (c) *Labour in India*

In recent years, we have heard a great deal about labour organisations set up in different parts of India. This started, with the concentration of labour in some of the larger industries, specially Iron and Steel in Jamshedpur. It naturally took some time before the capitalists realised that they could not secure efficiency amongst the labour employed by them if they failed to pay adequate attention to its needs, apart from the question of granting it an adequate minimum wage. The housing, medical and other arrangements, including the education of children are some of the fundamental and yet rudimentary duties of employers of labour on a large scale. Those who have had the good fortune to visit Detroit and see with their own eyes what Henry Ford has done to the

thousands of people employed in his factory, will realise how important it is for the success of any industry to divide its attention almost equally between the efficiency of the work turned out through adequate business methods and the health, comfort and other amenities that must be provided for the employees if they are to do their work efficiently. In India, it is the fashion to argue that being a poor country, the people are satisfied with little ; they do not need much clothing, their food is mostly confined to the cheaper kind of grain, lentils and vegetables, they do not need any recreation or leisure and they can be left to look after themselves including their families and children. The larger employers of labour in India have been till now, Europeans. First and foremost were the Planters and owners of jute factories near Calcutta. Amongst the planters, the Indigo Planters of Bihar and the Coffee Planters of Southern India were well known. Those who have had anything to do with the organisation of these planting industries know fully well that it has taken many years for the companies in India to realise their responsibilities in regard to the taking care of the labour population. It is a fallacy to suppose that labour which migrates to industrial centres from

rural tracts is better looked after. This is not always the case, for if the industrial centres happen to be within reach from populous villages, labour prefers to come and go and so do the employers prefer not to have their labour on their property. The latter have to incur expenditure for cooly lines, medical help, etc., when they have to import labour from a distance. The whole question turns on how much money the capitalists can spare for the benefit of labour as a legitimate expenditure in their budget. Even to-day, as regards wages, some of the employers of tea-gardens, and the Planting Companies of Southern India believe that all the agitation for higher wages is due to political agitation. At all events one of the greatest problems in India in future will be the harnessing of labour on an efficient basis and a friendly understanding between labour and capital, without which no sound industrial development can take place in any country. India, after all is in an infant stage so far as industrial development is concerned.

This is, however, another side to the picture. The proper re-adjustment of labour and capital for the mutual advantage of both cannot be secured with labour that is for the most part illiterate. Illiteracy amongst labour generally encourages

the growth of a meddlesome class of labour leaders or intermediaries who stir up trouble and mislead them. India has to go through several stages of evolution in the course of which, labour can stand for itself, and not have to depend on middle men or so-called defenders or prosecutors of labour interests. India will be the victim of so-called labour leaders who are by no means disinterested even in the most advanced countries. We have had instances even in England during the last War when labour leaders took advantage of the general disorganised condition of industries to exploit capitalists on the pretext of helping labour, really to help themselves. In Mexico, I found the Mexican Indians, who are a very shrewd and intelligent lot of people, had often been led by unscrupulous labour leaders, who went from village to village to rouse them with exciting information and brought about general strikes in the important industrial centres of the country, after collecting money as per capita contribution for themselves. India has yet to realise the dangers which may come in the wake of organisations of labour on an unsound basis. What is wanted, therefore, is a training ground for labour leaders and a guarantee of employment by a Joint Board of Capi-

tal and Labour in all the large industries, which should employ these trained labour advisers on the one hand, and act as intermediaries in disputes between capital and labour. The representatives of labour as well as capital should have right to appear and plead before any Board of Arbitration that may be set up for the settlement of labour disputes.

It requires a broad imagination to provide suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between Capital and Labour. In India, capitalists for the most part are powerfully prejudiced and guided by vested interests. The fight, therefore, is somewhat one-sided and it requires a great deal of strength and power for labour organisations to stand up to their rights and fight against their wrongs. Hence the difficulty. New industries are being started every day in India. There is, besides, a vast army of millions of agricultural labour in the country. Problems take a new shape day to day, year to year. What, therefore, is wrong in India as regards labour is that there is no consistent policy laid down for the guidance of those who are ostensibly entrusted with the duty of protecting the interests of labour. A training ground has to be first established for the dissemination of sound economic

ideas for the guidance of both labour and capital. For it stands to reason that without education amongst the labour population, and without broader ideals of humanitarian control of labour, India will continue to be a country full of maladjustments.

There has been no classification of labour properly speaking in India, since the earliest days of Indian history; thus it has come about that labour has not been specialised or skilled, except in a few groups of workmen who are specially in demand for building work on the decorative side. Even these, as we know, in the days of the Mogul Emperors were imported from outside. Labourers are, therefore, so to speak, "the drawers of water and the hewers of wood." Skilled labour in India has always been scarce, and even to-day we have to get together Bevin Boys to go to England for training. The War has brought about momentous changes in the organisation of labour throughout India. The Labour Department maintains 384 Technical Training Centres, spread all over India with a training capacity of 4,700. But this after all is a drop in the ocean for a large country like India. Labour legislation should be a federal subject in the future constitution of India, but

under the Act of 1935, Federal and Provincial Legislators have concurrent jurisdiction over this matter.

The condition of the landless labourers is pitiful, and under the land revenue system in the British provinces, whatever facilities are given for the acquisition of land to whoever may apply, it is notorious that in the disposal of land applications in the Tahsils, the landless classes have been for centuries unfortunate. The landless labourer generally comes from the depressed classes, and he is denied the right of holding even an acre of land in his own name. The village officials, even after the superior Revenue Officers have granted land to the landless classes, manage to get the land transferred to some other name surreptitiously. This is one of the serious wrongs in the land allotment and transfer system of India. This is partly due to the illiteracy prevailing amongst the bulk of the masses in the country on account of which, even those who by law or custom are allowed to hold land are denied the privilege to do so by every kind of subterfuge practised by the village officials. It will be seen that the landless amongst the agricultural population have increased in recent years rather than decreased.

Even to-day the standard of wages of labour in India has not correspondingly increased, with reference to the standard of the cost of living and the great merchant houses of Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi and even Madras which deal with the produce of the country, or have factories to convert the raw materials into half-finished commodities will not admit that there need is any need for the increase of wages, though the average cooly or a skilled artisan or labourer has to pay now, more money for his rice which he buys in the market for himself and his family. The standards of comfort as between the employer and the employee are so far removed that it does not matter to the employer how economically depressed the employee is and how hopelessly he is struggling with the increase in prices in food-stuffs to keep his body and soul together. Even low-paid Government servants are given dearness allowances. It would, indeed, surprise the world to know that in some grades of labour in India to-day, the standard of wages is practically the same as it was fifty years ago. Could any one believe, who knows anything of Indian conditions or economic problems, that there are some labourers who are paid so little as even four annas per day; for them the actual working

days in the year are below 200.

The Trade Union Movement, as it is known in the West, did not begin in India till almost after the last World War. But it must be admitted that even to-day the organised association of the workers in the country is far below the stage of development which it has reached in Great Britain and in many other countries. Within a period of five years (1919 to 1923) scores of unions were formed in all parts of India. The movement had made a fair penetration on the railways, in postal and telegraph departments, among seamen, and in the textile industry at Ahmedabad, and at certain other centres. The pressing need for co-ordination of individual unions was recognised at the very early stage of the movement, and both central and provincial federations were formed. A central organisation at the apex was also necessary because only such a body could make recommendations with regard to the personnel of the labour representation on Indian delegations to the annual sessions of the International Labour Conference. Thus, the All-India Trade Union Congress was formed in 1920 on a national basis. Although, there are a few unions of Jute Mill workers in Bengal and four or five unions of textile workers in Bombay City,

the Trade Union Movement has not made any appreciable progress in these two centres.

The Treaty of Versailles, in providing for the creation of an International Labour Organisation, and the holding of periodical conferences, had laid down that the delegates representing labour from the State members should be chosen by national labour organisations. Representatives of Indian labour attended the earliest conferences and on their return they set themselves the task of forming trade unions in the country. But this, being an entirely new development was not viewed favourably by the Indian employets.

The Trade Union Movement is still in its infancy in India, and when labour is fully organised with a national government to guide and control, then only and not till then can labour conditions all over the country improve in co-ordination with the departments of education, agriculture, and public health.

In the course of time labour is sure to be a powerful movement in this country and will organise itself without doubt, as a political party. That is looking far ahead. Factory labour is organised to the extent that industries are being developed ; agricultural labour is for the most part

influenced by village economic conditions and is thrown out of employment in bad seasons, through famine and pestilence. Casual labour leads to a hand to mouth existence. When demand for labour of every description increases, the migratory labour will be better paid, but drink, indebtedness and inefficiency due to disease reduces its earning capacity. It is indeed a wonder how the labouring population clothed in rags and half-starved, six months out of twelve, manage to exist. The labour problem in India will become acute as time goes on, with the keenness of economic struggle, spread of literacy and attractiveness of factory work in urban areas. Unless land owners in their own interests take care of their agricultural labour, give them better wages and better living conditions, Indian agriculture will face a crisis of the first magnitude.

The middle man is not merely the creation of the old-world economic conditions where he was a necessity as owing to want of facilities of communication and transport it was the man who had the money that came to the rescue of the producer to handle the produce or distribute it in the market whatever the people in the remotest parts of rural tracts had to sell. As an old country,

India had her middle men in every walk of life. We know the curse of the middle men in Europe. In fact, it is one of the essentials of capitalism and wherever capitalism has grown the middle man appears in various garbs to exploit labour, production and even distribution, with the aid of the capital that he has been lucky to amass. In India, however, capitalists are few and they do not organise the middle man's job in the same way as the cleverer people of the West do. Here, the middle man is a parasite who lives in the village himself. He advances money for cultivation expenses such as the purchase of cattle, seed and agricultural implements. He lends money in time of scarcity and also for domestic occurrences amongst those with whom he lives, at exorbitant rates of interest,—he was a most useful institution in days of old but now has established himself in every walk of life. To him is mortgaged not only the immediate crop of the year but of several years in succession. To-day the curse of the middle man has spread in industries and other labour occupations.

There are many other spheres in which the middle man plays an important part. First, and foremost, labour in India being illiterate and scattered, the middle man comes in to organise it mostly

for his own ends whether it is plantation labour or labour of the artisan, such as the brick-layer, mason or any other kind of labour which is not based on caste distinction under the caste system. Under the caste system, labour was protected under a guild, as it were. The lascars of the Steam Ship Company have the Sarangs who organise them and ostensibly give them a certain salary, part of which he appropriates to himself. Amongst labour gangs to repair the roads, plantation labour, even rickshaw coolies in places where the means of transport has to be done by rick-shaws such as hill stations in India, we have the intermediaries who sometimes are indispensable when there is no union amongst labour. Thus, we see that in every walk of life the middle man in India, owing to illiteracy amongst the people has abundant scope to exploit labour of every description.

In conclusion, I may quote what Sir George Schuster says on the grave problem in his book already referred to :

"Friction and discontent in the past can be very largely traced to the lack of human contact between employers and employed, to the almost universal employment (in both European and Indian-managed factories) of a class

of intermediaries to act between managers and men in handling all matters including engagements and dismissals, to the bad feeling which is thus created partly by exploitation and abuse of their powers by these intermediaries, partly by the fact that completely illiterate workers are liable to all sorts of unjustified suspicions and misunderstandings and are at the mercy of misleading statements and promises. At this point as at every other lack of education is the fundamental weakness of Indian industry.'"

## CHAPTER VI

### VILLAGE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

The economic condition of the village population throughout India has been no doubt a concern of both the Government of the country as well as the people. It has been difficult to carry the village population with official or non-official efforts for their economic improvement, for they are primarily concerned with crops and their struggle for existence, which for the most part depends on seasonal conditions. When it is considered that out of a total population of 400 millions, nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths live in rural parts, the problem becomes so tremendously large to deal with, that schemes to improve particular tracts by starting model villages as an example, have so far not secured tangible results. If, on the other hand, attempts are made to start from the very bottom, and existing village organisations are made use of, we may then have some nucleus to build upon. We have attempted to revive village panchayats by passing regulations, re-establishing the village

courts ; we have started village improvement committees and better-living societies ; we have organised settlements, introducing improved modes of housing conditions, village roads, village schools and other village institutions such as temples, recreation gardens, wells, etc. But in all these efforts not even a fringe of the village population has been touched. The food they eat, the clothes they wear, the insanitary conditions amongst which they live cannot all be altered in a day. There is no lack of ideas amongst our people, but there is a lack of workers. Any movement for village reconstruction can only be successful on a national basis. There should be a national improvement endowment fund raised throughout the land, to be spent by non-official agencies interested in this work under a ten years' plan in respect of each district or taluk, but the trouble in India is, that for all such work we have to engage paid officers, and there are no volunteers forthcoming. Even if they be paid officers, so long as they find they get their salaries from Government they have no enthusiasm for their work. These are the great hindrances for any scheme of village reconstruction.

The local boards established in various parts

of India have not been successful in looking after the interests of the villages. The small town municipalities have done good work, but without proper supervision have fallen into apathy and indifference. Our people are accustomed to everything being done for them by Government and we have yet to learn the spirit of self-help and self-reliance. If, therefore, it will take a long time before the village population are sufficiently enlightened, educated and interested, what can be done right now? With the experience I have had in Indian States as well as in British India, I am inclined to the opinion that an extensive drive to remove illiteracy, improve sanitation and provide food by way of storing grain in granaries is necessary. At least 25 per cent. of the revenue of every taluk should be thus spent by giving it to village organisations. Their vital needs have first to be attended to before they can be interested and taken out of this slough of despondency. They have to be saved from the ravages of epidemics such as plague, cholera and small-pox, and made to believe that everything is not fate and all they could do is to wait for providence to give them better luck or to curse the evil deities to whom they render propitiatory services to avert disaster and ill-luck. The mentality

of our people is a stumbling-block for any scheme of reforms in this direction, and I can speak from experience when trying to help the people even in the populated towns which were visited by cholera, that they were altogether averse to moving out of infected areas or be taken to epidemic hospitals, and preferred to die in their own miserable mud huts and insanitary surroundings. At one time I had to use drastic measures by setting hamlets, in which cholera was taking a heavy toll, on fire, and then moving the old, infirm and the sick to open-air places where huts were constructed at municipal expense. Fatalism and superstition are the twin-sisters in village life which exercise influence as witches to weigh down the village population to a condition of continued misery and depression. Even when sanitary dwellings are constructed and people of the sweeper class are removed to live in them, they desert to their old filthy surroundings. This is partly human nature. We know, for example, how the people in the east end of London use baths provided in their tenements to stack coal in them.

While it is true that the Indian peasant is burdened with debt, this state of affairs existed long before the British came to India. It is largely due

to extravagant expenditure on weddings, funerals and ceremonies. It is the most serious problem in India and the only radical solution is a detailed enquiry in every village about agricultural indebtedness and the scheme of taking over the debt by Government to be repaid by the cultivators over a period of years. This has been accomplished to some extent in one or two Indian States, but to do it all over India is much harder. Co-operative Societies, land mortgage banks, etc., exist and are extending but they cannot replace the local money-lender.

In some of the Indian States such as Mysore and Baroda a great deal has been done. In Mysore, a scheme called the Village Improvement Scheme was sanctioned nearly thirty years ago. Recently, a movement was also started in the United Provinces to introduce better living amongst the villagers. Without any desire to belittle the efforts of those who have worked hard in these directions, it must candidly be confessed that the condition of the villages in the rural parts and in the interior of the country show little advance.

Some time back the Governor of the United Provinces spoke to his people, having visited one of the centres of Better Living Societies, to the

effect that it was no use their sweeping the streets and making little roads here and there, only to show a little sign of outward improvement, when the Governor comes, and do nothing during the rest of the year.

Some time back a distinguished scholar of the Benares University, Mr. K.V. Rangaswami Iyengar, in the course of his inaugural address to the History and Economics Association in Madras, complained that India was not given opportunity to improve her economic position. He said, "Whenever they asked the British Government about it, they appointed a committee and soon another committee followed and so on. By the time the report of one committee was read and public criticism was offered on it another committee started work." This is very true. The days of committees and conferences should end and practical action taken.

For several decades, the co-operative movement, specially conceived to improve the lot of rural population has been working in every province. There has been a band of Government officials from the Registrar downwards, and yet can one say with confidence that the village indebtedness to the local money-lender has been reduced? Then, there is the question of the development of

cottage industries. The Government framed rules for giving State-aid by way of loans to those who are engaged in cottage industries. But is there any appreciable improvement in the development of these cottage industries throughout the country? As the Madras paper, the HINDU, recently pointed out, without the supply of electricity and modern tools and also capital, the villagers cannot take advantage of any of the facilities granted by the rulers. Government should do something for the supply of raw materials when they establish cottage industry institutes. Skilled workers should be supplied to the villages to train those who are accustomed to carry on certain kinds of industries suited to the neighbourhood.

The subject of rural uplift is many-sided. There is the question of improving public health, and combating epidemic diseases. Then, there is the question of giving education of the right type to the villagers including agricultural and vocational training. Thirdly, there is the problem of improving village agriculture not through a highly centralised system, but through State-aid and advice, within easy reach of the agriculturists in every tract, and lastly, raising the economic level of the village people in general by improving their housing

condition, their cattle, their water supply and their medical aid.

There are many movements initiated in recent years to introduce better living amongst the villagers. It is estimated that there are nearly one million villages in India inhabited by over 220 million souls. If that estimate is correct and there is no reason to doubt it, the welfare of India's teeming millions really concerns itself with the village folk and not those living in towns. The villagers are, for the most part, illiterate, and uncared for and the problems arising so far as their general uplift is concerned are involved, as they have to take into account differences of religion, caste, sect, habits and customs and also a general lack of sanitation prevailing, for the most part, in every rural area. It can be maintained without contradiction that some of the greatest efforts made by social workers in India to improve the lot of the villagers have not met with any great success. The Punjab scheme of rural reconstruction, initiated by that brilliant civilian, Mr. Brayne improved the economic conditions of the villagers to a certain extent. The Dayalbagh settlement is another great example to modernise India's conservative sentiments. But these are localised efforts which will not touch the general bulk of the people. We have to

introduce universal methods which will apply to all parts of the country and which will be conducted on modern lines by the introduction of suitable forms of village government, in which the villagers themselves must take an active part. We must instil a spirit of self-reliance, introduce a system of voluntary village educational institutions and other organisations suited to the needs of the particular locality, such as weaving, agriculture, cane and rattan work, bell-metal vessels, pottery, etc. Each village, economically should be, as far as possible, self-supporting in regard to their cottage industries, but as regards agriculture, the village population should be a part of the bigger scheme of agricultural development which must be controlled direct and financed by the government specially for distribution of seed, advance for cattle and agricultural implements, especially ploughs. This is necessary at the initial stages and later on they will be sufficiently educated to take up the movement themselves. The methods of agricultural improvement should take the form of demonstrative farms in a group of villages, supply of seed, manure and agricultural implements at cost price and appointment of agricultural inspectors who should be paid from

the State and who should be available to give instruction and advice on all agricultural matters to the agriculturists. These are not new ideas, and have been adopted with success in many provinces in India, but much remains to be done. Experiments have been made also in regard to seed selection, substitution of industrial crops, but primarily speaking, "Grow more food" campaign should be a permanent policy of the agricultural department. In every scheme of village reconstruction, agriculture should take the first place, then cottage industries and above all primary education should be conducted in a manner that will not interfere with the village economy of the people. Parents often fear that once a school is started the younger generation will lose all liking for the profession of their forefathers. They will run away to the nearest small towns to get a job and they will not favour the idea of helping their own people in tilling the soil. It has to be pointed out to the village folk that education has to be imparted mostly for the purpose of improving the land and for the development of subsidiary industries which will increase the earning power per head amongst the village population.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE POPULATION PROBLEM AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The statistics relating to the increase of population per decade in India need not be given here. The last Census brings the total population of India to just near four hundred million. The economic condition of the people, their earning capacity, the abject poverty of the masses, the slow development of industries to utilise the resources of the country, the neglect of food production in spite of large *centralised expenditure in the department of agriculture*, the oppression by the money-lender resulting in the everlasting indebtedness of the Indian peasant, all contribute towards physical unfitness, inadequate resistance to disease, increase of crime, such as infanticide, which even in cities like Bombay, the official Coroner declared the other day, was on the increase.

In dealing with the problem of population, we are confronted with two lines of action. First, prevention of disease, extensive spread of maternity

and child welfare, and secondly facilities for medical aid in rural parts, both for men and women. These are all humanitarian movements on the one side leading often to the preservation of the partially unfit in some respects. On the other hand, the high mortality in the country and the low average space of life allotted to the individual, must dictate a policy of prevention of disease and preservation of the race. In a recent book published by the TIMES OF INDIA the following paragraph in the chapter on Public Health gives the situation in a nutshell :—

“A large proportion of the general population suffers from varying degrees and forms of malnutrition, while actual deficiency diseases are all too common. Whether existing food deficiencies, quantitative, and qualitative, are capable of easy correction, is doubtful. It can safely be asserted that the Indian people have so far refrained from following the example of Western nations in respect of restriction of families, so that, in the absence of devastating catastrophes such as the influenza epidemic of 1918, the annual additions to the population will continue to increase. It is not easy to visualise the ready adoption of this solution to population pressure. Many local bodies and municipal councils are still

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apparently reluctant to provide pure water supplies and suitable drainage schemes, and refuse to see the urgency of improved environmental hygiene. It is permissible to doubt if any further marked advance in public health standards will be possible until Indian women are sufficiently educated to appreciate the desirability and necessity of that betterment."

With the abnormal rise in the population which, by comparison with people of other countries, is physically on a lower level, a higher standard of health is a policy of necessity. That will increase fecundity, average duration of life and less death-rate amongst infants.

There is, however, the other side of the shield. Child marriages, though discouraged partly by legislation and partly by social reforms, still prevail. Girls become mothers at an unripe age. There is no widespread movement in sight towards birth control. In one large family we find one or two getting on in the world and having as their dependents at least a dozen others. Inequality of efficiency due to large families of a dozen or more children, is a common factor in the population problem. It is idle to expect that ideas relating to restriction of families will ever be popular in India. What then is the alternative? If India holds five to six hun-

dred million by the end of this century, a not unlikely contingency, economically there is no hope for her future unless with the stoic indifference to "nature red in tooth and claw" we pin our faith to the immutable laws of destruction to keep pace with and balance the rapid growth of production. If so, we might as well revert to the uncivilised mediaeval conditions of life. Thus we find that all progressive movements based on scientific research, principles of modern economics must be given a fair chance in India to tackle this problem. One of the essential features of progress in this direction is a physical fitness campaign amongst the youths of the country, which even England had thought fit to inaugurate and which will improve through national and international athletic games and competitions the average standard of health amongst the population. This should be gradually co-ordinated with military training of the nation as a whole for the defence of the country.

### *Public Health*

The Public Health Administration, including the medical in British India, has been during the past several decades almost stationary. The administrative side is controlled by the Indian Medical

Service and the technical side by the medical men recruited from this country, some of whom have had British qualifications. The division of work, entailing also differences in pay, has been the subject of criticism in the Assemblies of India, but so far there is no sign in evidence that any reorganisation is contemplated. Even though, since the introduction of Diarchy in the provinces under the Montford Reforms and provincial autonomy under the Act of 1935, the Ministers in charge were Indians, money could not be found for improvements and additional grants to augment the expenditure. The total for the whole of India for 1937, under expenditure on account of medical aid, was Rs. 37,766,178—the corresponding figure for 1928 being Rs. 39,578,526. It is well known that the percentage of the total expenditure on the total revenues in British India is very small, indeed, not exceeding 6 per cent., whereas in some of the Indian States, it is considerably higher. I do not wish to say very much regarding the efficiency as well as the equipment of hospitals and dispensaries throughout the country. Suffice it to say, that one of the grievous wrongs that India is labouring under, at present, is the inadequacy of medical aid for both rural and urban population and the want of

up-to-date facilities and equipment for treatment of diseases.

Looking to the ratio of deaths per thousand of the population as a result of this sad lack of efficient medical aid, the figures for the last seven or eight years show that there is no decrease, but rather serious fluctuations under Cholera and Small-pox ; whereas, under Fever it is very high in Bengal, the U. P., and the Punjab. Infant mortality under one year is also very high. It is so high as 278 per thousand of male and 242 of female, in some provinces and here again we see no improvement.

It may be argued that the climate of India is such, that the visitation of these epidemics is a natural phenomenon, and Government cannot make sufficiently elaborate arrangements to cope with them in a vast country like India, but in every civilised country, public health is considered to be one of the most essential services of Government, and securing the health of nations should be its primary concern. Malaria is causing havoc in many of the provinces, especially in Bengal. According to one recent estimate, 100,000,000 people in India suffer yearly from malaria. India needs to have a big drive against malaria and other preventable epidemics. Here is an extract from the Bengal

improvement being made in these important directions.

One of the most striking recollections of my early youth was the impressionable character of various advertisements that caught my eye, not only in the vernacular papers of the country, but also English papers under the management of Indians. It must be said to the credit of British journalists in India that they do not encourage certain classes of advertisements in their papers.

Recently, in a book I published entitled *THE RHYTHM OF LIVING* I quoted a remark from *THE READERS' DIGEST* that a stranger visiting the United States and passing through the subways would be struck by advertisements of a kind which would convince him that all Americans were suffering from a particular kind of ailment, viz., constipation. Any non-Indian reader from other countries, picking up half a dozen newspapers printed in English and if he happened to know vernacular, picking up at least one vernacular paper in each province, would have no hesitation in asserting that the majority of Indian men and women suffered from certain diseases for which patent medicines are advertised. This state of affairs has developed to an alarming degree. In India, this trade is more insidious as

there is no provision of law by which patent medicines prepared by unqualified agencies can be proscribed for sale, or their contents made known. It is well known that in the drug market of India, patent medicines many of which are injurious to health, profess to cure many ills.

The low average standard of physical fitness coupled with the growth of the population can be of no material aid for creating a powerful self-contained and self-defending nation. Disease, malnutrition, unscientific handling of complaints to which the young are victims, tend to undermine national health. There is hardly any propaganda or a system of education in the adolescent stage. Medical inspection in schools has been introduced but is the advice taken? Eyes and teeth are neglected. Mere theoretical action does not meet the vastness of the problem. There is nothing done towards the prevention of the spread of infection amongst the people. If the relative statistics are collected perhaps it will open the eyes of our Social Reformers.

Great changes have taken place in India among all classes and communities in regard to their food during the past half a century. When each village or town was self-contained it depended upon the produce of the land belonging to it, which by the

way was best suited for those who sprung from the soil and who are, therefore, best able to produce them for their own use. With the facilities of communication and the distribution of food and grains all over the country, the food amongst the people, except those who are very poor, is changing rapidly. We have had in India several conferences in which distinguished medical and scientific men have taken part to go into the question of food and malnutrition. But they have hardly tackled the problem from the point of view of the infants and the working classes. Many centres no doubt have been opened in some of the more advanced cities like Bangalore, Bombay and Madras for child welfare. The milk centres for distribution of wholesome milk have also been organised, but visiting these centres of activity one wonders what is the fraction out of the whole total of children that are served or benefited by them. Statistics will prove that infant mortality in India has not materially diminished and it is wrong for any nation to allow mothers to bring forth children when the State does little or nothing to enable these mothers to bring their children up with healthy nourishment without which, their power of resistance against disease and infection will be reduced to a minimum.

It is no use having physical training or culture in schools and colleges when we neglect the health of the generations from the time of their infancy to their adolescence. The food problem is the most urgent problem in India. The diet is not balanced and poverty prevents any choice. The problem of sanitation and public health administration is one that can be solved only with the co-operation of Government and the people. Money is needed in the first instance; secondly, health workers in every area supplied with adequate stock of essential medicines; and thirdly, preventive measures adopted on a large scale. The war is teaching us many bitter lessons and numerous organisations are being set up to solve the difficulties. The accumulated neglect of the past is manifesting itself but the situation is getting seriously out of hand.

Recently, Beverly Nichols, a Britisher of some repute, as author and journalist, sent a most remarkable contribution from a hospital in Pesha-war where he was lying ill, about public health conditions in India. It is worth quoting the criticism, which bears glaring testimony to the appalling public health conditions of India to which I have made here only a cursory reference.

Paying a tribute to the Indian doctors and their skill, he says, "Doctors alone cannot give the nation a clean bill of health. In India there is only one trained nurse to every 100,000 inhabitants. India is a microbe paradise. The continent abounds in diseases due to climate, appalling insanitation through centuries, and ignorance and superstition." He goes on to say that to the question, can the British pretend to be satisfied with what they have done for India, the honest answer is, 'no.' He then compares India to Wales and adds that "the cost of a day's war expenditure in the distress areas of Wales would have saved endless misery. Similarly the cost of a day's war expenditure in India might initiate the beginning of a new era."

It is no doubt true that whatever may be done has to be done on a large scale, and whatever has been done does not even touch the fringe of the problem. With the growth of population which is estimated at the rate of 3 million a year, what can anyone do to face the problem. First and foremost, there must be birth control, initiated by a National Government of India throughout the country; and secondly a drive against malaria and epidemics, such as cholera, plague, small-pox, on an extensive scale. Suitable preventive measures

are necessary such as inoculation, provision of pure water supply in every town, and of wells in every village, control of food-stuffs, prevention of adulteration of drugs, of milk and milk products, and of edible fats and oils, and establishment of itenerary medical aid throughout the rural tracts with an adequate supply of medicines and appliances. They seem to be rudimentary measures in the eyes of all civilised Governments in other countries. In India, however, we leave the problem to get along somehow, owing to its colossal magnitude and local authorities have neither the law nor finance to help them. No one has as yet worked out a national health insurance scheme for India.

Closely connected with Public Health is the problem arising from the Excise policy of the Government of the country, also the policy of importing foreign liquor in large quantities. The present war has shown with what keenness the public watch the supply of spirits and wine,—the roaring trade the black market enjoys. There are now substitutes for the imported stuff. Much could be written on the subject. Prohibition as a Government measure failed after many years of trial in the U. S. A., and it is doubtful if it will meet a better

fate in India. In a vast scattered country like India, illicit distillation is hard to control or prevent, and the danger is great and likely to be more diffused than was the case in the States. But no one will deny that the drink habit in India is on the increase, and this can be substantiated by the increase of foreign liquor imported into this country, and the large increase in the customs revenue derived therefrom.

The Congress Government in Madras made an experiment in prohibition in certain selected areas. The Bombay city also tried the same experiment. I wonder if the drink habit was reduced by these measures. A certain class of people will pay anything for what they want, and thus it was that bootlegging was a paying game in the States. Wine merchants in this country can evade the law and fill their pockets. Even then, I think the experiment is worth-while to check the tide of drink habit spreading all over; but rules and regulations should be easy to work and Government must be prepared to forego a large revenue. Restriction laws for the service and sale of intoxicating liquor prevails in most civilised countries including Scandinavia. Why not India? Amongst the rural population, prohibition of fermented Arrack or Toddy will be a

desirable measure, and the right to vend intoxicating liquor of any kind may be granted in special cases and in special neighbourhoods.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DEFENCE PROBLEMS

The late Poet Rabindranath Tagore in a statement he issued on his eightieth birthday made some remarks about British rule in India with special reference to the main problem of the poverty of the masses. Having laid emphasis on the great hopes that the British connection with India has aroused in the minds of all classes of educated Indians, as well as the influence of English literature on the Indian mind, the Poet said, "At heart for several years we had not lost faith in the philanthropy and generosity of the British race, but under the dead-weight of British administration, India remains at the very bottom static in utter helplessness."

The static condition of India in some matters of supreme national importance is one of the wrongs to be righted before any great advance can be made in regard to the question of national defence and organisation of India's man power. I have already discussed the question of population,

but the mere increase in number only adds to our difficulties without the corresponding efforts to improve the breed or the quality of the race. Hence, all the aspirations for a strong Indian army, military training and an organisation of national defence, however natural, have to be supported and fostered by improved methods of race production. If India is going to have independence there is much to think about, especially in matters of national defence.

In this connection, it would be interesting to go into the history of the Army Administration of India under British rule from the time of Lord Clive, the first of the great Pro-Consuls in India. In 1796, the armies under the East India Company's control, consisted of 13,000 English and 67,000 Indian troops. Prior to the Indian Mutiny of 1857 there were 231,000 Indians and 38,000 British troops. The Peel Commission in 1859 recommended that the ratio of Indians and Europeans in the Infantry and Cavalry should not exceed 2 to 1 for Bengal and 3 to 1 for Madras and Bombay, that the artillery should be chiefly manned by Europeans, so that the Indian section of the army may be composed of different nationalities and castes which should as a rule be mixed promiscuously through each regiment. After

going through many vicissitudes, the Indian army consisted of 60,000 British and 150,000 Indian troops and there were 6,771 officers of whom less than 100 were Indians. As a result of the changes effected by the Mutiny, the commissioned ranks of the Indian army were entirely filled by British Officers up to 1905. In that year, the Viceroy's Commission was instituted for Indian Officers, but their position remained subordinate to the lowest British subaltern. It was only after 1918, that as a recognition of India's war services, Indians were made eligible to hold the King's Commission, but only in the Infantry and Cavalry, but not in the Artillery, Engineers, Signal, Tank or Air. In addition, only ten vacancies were thrown open to Indians at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst, and a training school for Indian cadets was opened at Indore. In March 1922, a military academy for Preparatory Military Education for Indian officers was set up at Dehra Dun. There have been other changes introduced since, for example, "the eight units scheme" of Lord Rawlinson, the then Commander-in-Chief, under which six Infantry Battalions and two Cavalry Regiments were selected to be Indianised by posting the Indian commissioned officers to these units out of a total of 132 infantry

battalions and 21 cavalry regiments. Then followed the Indian Sandhurst Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Andrew Skeen. The Skeen recommendations were fairly comprehensive and were unanimous. Apart from the enlargement in the scope for the recruitment of Indian officers to receive the King's Commission, not only for the Infantry and Cavalry regiments, but also in the other branches of the army hitherto reserved for the British officers, the Committee made this important recommendation namely that "Indian officers who are to pull their weight in the army in India must be empowered to take command of other British officers junior to themselves, and take command of mixed bodies of troops."

It is hardly necessary to note that there was a growing discontent amongst Indians as regards the inadequacy of the reforms in the army administration of India, and the recommendations of the Simon Commission only aggravated matters as it laid emphasis on the differing military capacity of the various Indian races, pointed to the great danger of the withdrawal of the British officers and troops, making much of the necessity of army co-operation to support the police in coping with mobs driven frantic by religious frenzy. One of the most dis-

tinguished Indians, Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer, pointed out that the assumption of the inferiority of Indian troops and officers is wrong, and if there is any truth in the charge of Indian incapacity for military leadership, it is due to the manner in which it has been sedulously fostered by the system of training to which the Sepoy has been subjected. The British Government has been accused of a deliberate intention of confining recruitment in the army to particular areas and classes, and the British policy of classifying the races as martial and non-martial was in the opinion of the general body of Indian politicians, fictitious. It was also alleged that the British policy of confining recruitment to certain areas and classes, the unwillingness to provide for general military training have both contributed to the emasculation of the Indian people.

That eminent Indian statesman, Sir Jagadish Prasad, now in the Viceroy's Executive Council, in his appeal to the youth of India to join the army stated as follows: "Indian public men had tightly but vainly demanded that the Indian army should not be an army of Indian soldiers and British officers, but an army of Indians led by Indians. The process of Indianisation had been painfully slow in the past. It had produced the most deplor-

able results. We are profoundly ignorant of the military problems of our country because we had no inside knowledge of them. If Indians attempt to offer suggestions they are sneered at, as arm-chair politicians. The exclusion of Indians from the higher ranks of the army has also been responsible to a considerable extent for the prevalence of racial feeling in this country. The officers in the British army hardly meet any Indians except those of the servant class. The officers in the Indian Army deal largely with illiterate men drawn from the peasantry. There was no contact with educated Indians. The result was contempt amongst military officers for the educated Indian, who they thought could talk glibly, but failed miserably in a crisis where coolness, decision and the gift of leadership were needed. The antagonism and suspicion of educated Indians towards the army from which they were so unfairly excluded, were intensified. The army came to be looked upon as an instrument of foreign domination maintained at an extravagant cost."

As regards the cost of the army, it has been the chief burden upon the Central budget and it is somewhat an astonishing fact that the total outlay upon armament in India is between 2 to 3 times as great as the whole of the rest of the Empire excluding

Great Britain. It is a matter of signal importance that there was no responsible control of the military budget of British India, and the Governor-General-in-Council being subordinate to the Imperial Government has had often to meet military claims upon India pressed by the Imperial War Office. It is a certain fact that owing to the control exercised by the Secretary of State, the Indian Army can be used for any Imperial purpose and despatched to any part of the world without the consent of the Indian Legislature. It will be noted that the STATISTICAL ABSTRACT FOR BRITISH INDIA does not give any figures relating to the composition or the expenditure on the Indian army. Dr. Ambedkar's book on Pakistan has some pertinent criticisms to make on this point. These will be referred to later in this chapter.

The history of the Indian army and the various discussions and measures taken to bring its administration in a line with popular demand, makes sad reading. The British Government would not commit themselves to any definite policy and it is only when pressure was brought upon it that certain concessions were granted, but the Government of Indian Act of 1935 still showed the steel frame of British policy in India in regard to Army matters.

Indians, on the other hand, are doing very little to reach the goal which has been visualised in the political creed of India for a common Army of defence in the country. Communalism, growth of provincial nationalism, the distrust of one province against another, or rather the sense of superiority of one as against the other on matters of defence, are all contributing to perpetuate the obstacles that are in the way. There is perhaps also a lack of team-spirit.

In a paper read by General Barrow in October 1930, at the East India Association, London, he observed, "The North-West Frontier of India is the one land frontier in the Empire which is open to attack by a great power. Its defence cannot be left to an Indian Army administered and directed by a popular elected Indian Government." In another portion of the same paper, the author said, "I believe that those who know the country best will agree with me that in a self-ruling India the men of the North, the Pathans, Punjabi Mohammedans, Sikhs, Dogras and Jats and Rajputs and Garhwals will not submit to the dictatorship of the Bengalis, Madrasis and other non-martial races of Hindustan; the provinces who provide 77% of the Indian Army today will not consent to be governed by the

representatives of the rest of India, who only provide 23% and least of all by Bengal which provides nothing." In the course of argument, the Major-General also stated, that as long as communal differences exist to anything like the extent they do today, a National Army is out of the question.

These extracts present one of the most formidable obstacles to any scheme for a National Army in India. In a recent book by C. F. Andrews, called CHALLENGE OF THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER, the author questions the necessity of a large British Army on the frontier whose composition is based on the theory of an attack from Russia. As regards the frontier tribes who make frequent raids and to control whom frontier expeditionary forces are sent, the author points out that the frontier tribesmen are Moslems, and further that the Indian leaders claim that the pacification should be left in their own hands, and if British troops are gradually withdrawn and the problem of the frontier defence is left to Indian administrators responsible to an Indian Parliament, they will be able to come to terms with the tribes and eventually live at peace with them. These conflicting views lead us nowhere. In the future constitution of India National Defence must be under Indian control. In this connection

I should like to quote a significant passage in Keith's CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF INDIA, as follows :—

"Withholding of defence and external affairs renders the alleged concession of responsibility all but meaningless."

In Dr. Ambedkar's book on Pakistan there is an important chapter on the question of armed forces. In this chapter, he has explained the disinclination of the British Government to furnish any information to show the racial or communal constitution of the Indian army. It was so recently as 1938 that questions were asked in the Central Legislative Assembly, and in spite of all the heckling that the non-official members resorted to, the then Defence Secretary Mr. O'Gilvie refused to disclose details on the ground that it was not in the public interest to do so. That may be so, but the question turned on the point as to whether it was not true that the bulk of the army was drawn from the Punjab and from one community, inferring thereby that the Punjabi's position of supremacy in the Indian army was overwhelming. This is what Dr. Ambedkar says..... "The obstinacy on the part of the Government of India in the matter of giving information on this most vital point is giving rise

to all sorts of speculation as to the present proportion of the Moslems in the Indian army. Some say that the proportion is between 60 and 70%. In the absence of exact information one could well adopt the latter figure (meaning 70%) as disclosing the true situation."

The learned author also says that two glaring facts stand out from the survey. One is that the Indian army is predominantly Muslim in its composition, the other is that the Muslims who predominate are those from the Punjab and N. W. P. If Dr. Ambedkar's view that the Punjabi Mussalman is fully sensitive to the propaganda in favour of the Pan-Islamism is correct, then the whole question of the defence of India becomes seriously complicated and the Indianisation scheme also bristles with many difficulties.

This is, however, no time to take up old controversies, but we must know where the shoe pinches. During the war, the call to Indians to join the armed forces, Army, Navy and Air has been responded admirably by all classes of Indians and the services rendered by Indian units in war have been repeatedly and handsomely acknowledged. India's claim to take the primary share in India's own defence has been amply demonstrated. In spite of

difficulties ahead, the future of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force is well assured; and will be shaped in consonance of its proved efficiency and high standard. The old controversies and disappointments will be a thing of the past and will die down. Equality of status and a dignified and honourable position are, therefore, sure to be gained by India's fighting forces on a national basis in future. Each Unit for the future Union of India should contribute its own quota of man power and there should be universal military training for all classes, irrespective of race, caste and creed, to create a formidable national Indian Army under the Central Federal Government.

1855. For 60 years the competitive principle was not touched. There were very many variations in the age-limit, in the standard of education, and in the period of probation spent in England but the system of recruitment by competition was not touched. The Indian National Congress itself at its very first sitting and other famous persons and bodies repeatedly demanded the starting of a simultaneous examination in India, but nobody questioned the wisdom and excellence of the system of open competition.

### *The Post-War Period*

The last war gave a set-back to the principle of the competition. The quarter century starting from 1915 witnessed no less than a dozen methods of recruitment to the I. C. S. alone. There was first of all the competition in London open both to Englishmen and Indians. During the years 1915-17 some of those Indians who were unsuccessful at the open competition in London were appointed under the I. C. S. Temporary Provisions Act of 1915. Thirdly, those who had served in the War were appointed after a qualifying examination, under the Act of 1915. Fourthly, 45 Indians were appointed in 1921 and 1923 by nomination, in pursuance of the declared policy of associating

Indians in increasing numbers with the Government of the country. Fifthly, 14 surplus officers of the Indian Army were appointed to the I. C. S. in 1923. From 1922 a simultaneous examination was started in India. Sixthly, from the same year was started the system of nomination in India to redress the communal inequalities. Seventhly, there have been appointments of candidates because they belonged to a particular province, viz., Burma. Eighthly, English candidates have been nominated in London since 1936 by a selection committee to make good the shortage in open competition. The present war has upset the competition arrangements in London. Candidates, both English and Indian, are nominated by a Selection Board there. The quota system introduced with effect from January 1942 may be said to be another method, while the tenth method is the fixation of the 50 per cent. of the seats in the I. C. S. (and other important civil services both in the centre and the provinces) for candidates with war service.

All this is no doubt partly ancient history but no one knows what will happen to the I. C. S. as a service from the recruitment point of view after the present war. But there is no doubt, that candidates with war service will be largely enlisted in

the service as a matter of course. Has it struck any disinterested observer how these changes have affected the quality and calibre of the members of the I. C. S. during recent years, and does anyone ponder to think how long the I. C. S. as the highest administrative body in the Central, and in the Provincial Governments, will maintain its supremacy in the years to come?

Recruitment policy in the I. C. S. has undoubtedly helped a number of Indians to enter. Whether a better class of Englishmen are now tempted to compete or offer themselves for selection in London, is a delicate question to which I will not venture a reply. Satyendra Nath Tagore, the Poet Tagore's eldest brother was the first Indian to enter the I. C. S. by open competition in 1869. My father-in-law, Sir K. G. Gupta, and R. C. Dutt were the second batch to enter in 1871, and during the succeeding thirty-four years only 30 Indians were able to enter the service by the open competition in London, as it was not easy in those times, for Indian students to travel freely to Europe for purposes of education owing to caste and other difficulties; but the majority of the first Indian I. C. S. men belonged to the Brahma-Samaj movement of Bengal. We and our predecessors had to struggle

against vested interests and prejudices against Indians as to their executive capacity. In the evidence given by European members before the Public Service Commission, we were condemned as not being fit for executive posts and thus the majority of us were relegated to the judicial branch. Romesh Dutt resigned because he was not confirmed Commissioner of a division in Bengal. Sir K. G. Gupta was passed over seven times for a Commissionership because the European officers threatened to resign if an Indian was placed over them; but he was finally selected by a strong Governor for the Orissa division, facing consequences, and later rose to be the Senior Member of the Board of Revenue, the stepping-stone to a Governorship. Being an Indian, he was, of course, passed over for that high position and Lord Morley took him over to London and gave him work first to report on Fisheries, and later selected him and Nawab Syed Hussain Belgrami of Hyderabad as the first two Indian members of the India Council.

Times have now changed, and now Indians even outside the I. C. S. have been made Governors and many distinguished members of the Service hold high positions in the Government of India. Opposition and prejudice have died down, and there

is equality of opportunity between the Englishman and Indian today, and no doubt this is all to the good.

When the Indian constitution was changed by the Act of 1935, the position of the Indian Civil Service deteriorated and many retired on proportionate pension. Its prospects were limited, except Governorships of a few provinces, all high appointments were taken away and now what is the future of the I. C. S. when India gets after the war, full Dominion Status? Will it be like the British Civil Service which acts as a permanent advisory body under the Crown for the Ministers in Parliament? Will the recruitment policy also be again changed and special measures taken to encourage Britishers to enter the I. C. S. in large numbers?

I am personally in doubt as to whether the I. C. S. has not had its day and can any longer exercise the same influence for good work as before. Will our brilliant young men choose it as a career and have their ambition fulfilled? It will be a tragedy if it goes down to the level of mediocre administrations or becomes a constitution of permanent secretaries to Government in the various ministries as in England. That the British element will be reduced there is no doubt; and to keep the service

in its present form will be like fitting in the new structure of Government an old-fashioned piece of machinery with its obsolete bureaucratic traditions that will only lower the I. C. S. as a Secretariat with a veritable vicious circle in which our future ministries and politicians will be entangled and smothered. What is the alternative ? Each province should have a training ground like the old Hailebury College, and the best candidates recommended by the Universities should be chosen for administrative appointment in the different departments. The claims of all minorities must be considered without sacrificing efficiency, and this will not be a permanent measure, for in another 25 years, members of all communities, Brahmin and non-Brahmin, Hindu, Muslim and other communities will come to one level. Even now, we fail to notice striking differences amongst the I. C. S. men of different castes and communities—they are moulded in the same pattern. The number of men for the provinces and States should be fixed and I venture to predict that the Indian States will come in to obtain suitable administrators for their own territories and take advantage of the new system. The cadre should be reduced to limit the number of appointments to say 1,000. We need not have over 1,200 to

1,400 men holding a Brahmin caste of twice-born administrators as it were, with the rest as inferior in emoluments, in pension and other privileges. The British element must dwindle and the discriminating policy will be a thing of the past. Why then should the expenditure on the I. C. S. establishments be as high as it is today? The best in English tradition we should preserve but not special privileges and concessions which in olden days it was necessary to grant, to make it worth-while for the best type of Englishmen to come out and seek a 35 years' career in India. This caused bitterness and discontent in the minds of the Indian recruits and created difficulties. Now there is a gradual levelling up, and specialisation of work in every department. We were Jacks of all trades and Masters of none, as they often told us. We got along fairly well in all departments and jobs ; one day a Judge, the second a Collector, the third day Postmaster General, the fourth day Inspector General of Education and so on. Now departmental administration is complicated and highly specialised and can provide for their own expert administrators who will be needed by Ministers coming and going, in the exigencies of the political shuffle in the democracy that is to come.

The Secretariat System is a creation of the I. C. S. and has grown as a parasite in the trunk of the body. The system revels in the accumulation of files, and in and out of season justifies itself by opening new ones for every conceivable subject, and develops amongst its members the habit of noting from the Junior Assistant Secretary to the highest top Secretary of the department, one day aspiring to the Executive Council. Circumlocution and red-tape are the twin-sisters of this institution and it is very difficult for any young recruit to get out of it. Many of our brilliant civilians spend most of their service in the Secretariat till they rise to the top of the ladder. In modern administration, secretaries and under-secretaries to Government are not wanted, and the ministries should have their own personal secretaries, and sooner the file system is abolished, or at all events the files stop circulating from one department to another, the better it will be for the administration. Some drastic reforms are necessary in this connection and under a system of decentralisation small secretariats with personal secretaries under every Minister of Government will expedite business, save a lot of money and prevent wire-pulling through subordinate officials, rendering it possible

for the highest authorities to be in direct touch with what is going on today. The present method of disposal in the highly organised secretariats of the Central and Provincial Governments is the cause of what may be described as a soulless Government.

contracting a marriage under this Act had to make negative declaration to say, that they were not Hindus, Christians, Muslims or followers of any other religion. This was the beginning of civil marriage legislation in India, and before further legislation came into being, many members of different communities took shelter under this Act, and although Hindus, they made this negative declaration. At the present moment, inter-community and inter-caste marriages are frequently taking place in India, and no test case has been fought out in the law courts to determine the validity of such marriages or the effect on succession or legitimacy. The caste system is gradually breaking. Thus, we see that while in the majority of cases old customary forms of marriage amongst the Hindus and Mohammedans still prevail, there is a growing number of inter-community and inter-caste marriages where religious ceremonies are dispensed with, and which are legalised in the Office of the Marriage Registrar.

The question arises, how a fusion of caste, creed and races in India is desirable, and how long it will take for such a fusion to produce a united India. My belief is that the whole marriage institution in India is at present legally in a fluid

of mixed marriages, i.e., marriages between Indians and Europeans. The transition period through which India is passing as regards marriage questions may lead to a stage when conservatism will finally win the battle, but no one can predict with certainty how far the present tendencies as regards marriage will contribute towards making India a strong and united nation.

In support of the view put forward, I may quote the concluding paragraph of an article on Marriage Reforms in India which was contributed to my INDIAN AFFAIRS in London in its very first issue, by Sir Harisingh Gour:—

“A century and a half of English education has materially altered Indian’s outlook. He has begun to doubt if such a thing as fate exists. Co-education and world travel have completely altered his mentality towards marriage; hence the large number of Indo-European marriages. Pioneers of Indian reform have long been struggling to remove the shackles of caste and religion from the secular tie of marriage. I happened to take up this question as soon as I found myself in the first Assembly of the Reformed Legislature; but the avalanche of orthodoxy proved too strong for my maiden effort, and I had to compromise with my opponents

husbands or wives from amongst their own group. To my mind it seems that all India cannot ever legislate on this subject, and each province will have to find its own solution. Probably each community will have to reform itself to bring the institution of marriage to a more civilised level.

Under the old Hindu social system there were no early marriages, and post-puberty marriages were not considered as being opposed to the Hindu religion. Hindu marriage being mostly a religious sacrament, the first stage of it is merely betrothal, and the second which is called consummation marriage, is really marriage as it is understood in all civilised countries, but early marriages are slowly but steadily dying out, and there is on the whole a more cultured outlook on the institution of marriage in India. This may prove not altogether a blessing, in the future, for the purity of descent or rather breed will be affected in a striking manner.

As regards the breed, here is a quotation from Yeats Brown's book.....*LANCER AT LARGE*.  
"Time-Spirit.

The Brahmins feel that they are about to be swamped by the huge illiteracy of the lower castes. At present the tide is running against the Aryan aristocracy. It may change, I hope it will, blood must

I, for myself, do not see clearly the way in which the peoples of India will travel in future years in regard to the marriage problem. It would be a good thing if the Hindu community slowly readjusts itself to modern conditions. It would be a good thing too if Hindus and Muslims and the different sects among them give up their rigidity and allow marriages under a common Civil Law, a law common to all classes and communities. But there is a long way to go before such a fusion takes place on a firm legal basis. For the present let social reformers watch the tendencies and social legislators take heed to ensure a balance between extreme conservatism and absolute individual liberty, between which a middle course is the best for India.

there are threatening clouds on the Indian horizon. What is it, for instance, that has caused a recrudescence of the communal clashes between Hindus and the Moslems? Attempts to settle differences between the Congress and the All-India Muslim League have failed; and Mr. M. A. Jinnah in his presidential address to the special session of the League at Calcutta made no bones about the feeling among large sections of Indian opinion with regard to the power now wielded by the Congress... He said, 'We Muslims cannot surrender, submerge under, or submit to the dictates of the ukase of the High Command of the Congress, which is developing into a totalitarian caucus functioning under the name of the Working Committee and aspiring to the position of a shadow Cabinet of the future Republic.'

"We are witnessing the emergence in India of a new kind of political institution, unheard of in past history, namely, a dictatorship by proxy. Such a dictatorship does not need military strength behind it, but derives its great popularity and support from the general

be found to educate public opinion against establishment of a dictatorship in the general government of the country. Faith in Mr. Gandhi and his good-will are undoubtedly all to the good in regard to matters political, economic, religious and social; but India with her teeming millions, with diverse creeds and social differences cannot be governed justly and impartially, unless leaders elected from every community are prepared to take the risk and stand before the bar of the judgment of public opinion and abide by the consequences. A dictator by Proxy is guarded by the halo of his own greatness, and does not make himself liable to any of the dangers which European Dictators every day have to face."

Although it is universally recognised, both in India and in England, that the Congress is the strongest political party in the country, yet no one outside the Congress admits its claim to represent the whole of India. For example, the Muslims consider it a party organised to establish Hindu Raj in India, although it is a fact that there are non-Hindu members in the Congress. It is to be con-

minorities all combined together will not have a sufficient number of votes to oppose a majority caucus.

Now let us turn back to some of the British opinions recorded by writers who are certainly not anti-Indian in their views but sympathetic. In chapter 10 of the book *INDIA AND DEMOCRACY* the writer says, "The aims and organisation of parties in India are different from those of political parties in England, and in the whole world there is perhaps no political party that resembles the Congress which is an anti-British party *par excellence*. It is a political mass movement which is dominated by a small clique which though standing for democracy is anything but democratic, in its attitude to its following." The writer goes on to say, "This attitude of Congress towards parliament was brought out even more clearly by the actions of the clique which rules the Congress party at the centre. The theory of parliamentary government is that a ministry remains in power as long as it has the confidence of the legislatures. But according to the practice developed by Congress, the provincial cabinets were in fact made responsible to a person known as the 'zonal dictator', who was a nominee of the central committee of the Congress

article quoted above, but is also the opinion of many distinguished leaders in India such as the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as I will show later.

The way the Congress party functioned under the new constitution when it came into power not only consolidated the All-India Muslim League as a distinctly hostile anti-Hindu organisation, but converted it to the theory that responsible government meant the control of the executive by the majority of the legislators and "the Muslims began to apprehend that once the Congress came to power, the Muslim who still holds a feeling of superiority of a martial over a non-military people would be degraded to be amongst the lower castes of Hinduism."

The All-India Muslim League as a political party has now committed itself to the creed of Pakistan which means the creation of Muslim sovereign states in Northern India. The position of the two major parties in India as it is today does not afford any help for the establishment of parliamentary system in the country. The division of the peoples of India today under a so-called party system runs on other lines as well, namely, ethnological divisions, and we have outside the

## CHAPTER XII

### A

## CONSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS OR RETROGRESSION

The constitutional history of India during the past thirty years is sufficiently well known to need recapitulation. Briefly speaking, the two important landmarks from August 1917 to 1941 are the two Acts of Parliament, one passed in 1919 introducing Dyarchy in the provinces, and the second in 1935 introducing full provincial autonomy and responsibility at the Centre. It is no use repeating the various pronouncements of His Majesty's Government from time to time. They have become now almost meaningless. India at the present moment is standing still after having gone back to where she was, before the passing of the Act of 1935. The scheme of provincial autonomy has broken down. The Congress Government resigned after functioning for a period, during which it was accused of totalitarian tendencies

smoke. There is determination on the part of the British Government, the Congress, and the Muslim League to stick to their guns.

The dangers of the situation which have been increased during the past three years are not sufficiently realised by the British Parliament judged by its mouth-piece the Secretary of State, and the Parliament itself as at present constituted cannot be considered to be a Representative Body holding views regarding India that is shared by the majority of English people in England.

One of the most distinguished statesmen of Southern India who was at one time an ardent follower of the Congress, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, speaking just before the war in August 1939, before the Madras University, on the problems of democracy in India, pointed out in a most learned and elaborate manner the defects of democracy as generally understood, and especially with reference to India's present condition. The lecturer said that the election of the Representatives in the Legislature is periodical and the people's active and continuous control over them is largely theoretical. Best men are seldom elected. Further, a Party Government is rarely a substitute for democracy, as electors are not free to choose their own repre-

possible. The Liberal Party is practically dead. Most of its adherents have joined Labour. The old Conservative Party is almost as liberal as the Liberal Party of the days of Gladstone and is leaning more towards socialism. Then there are many other groups but they will not be able to form a government. A coalition will even after the war be inevitable unless the old parties revert to their distinctive camps and fight a general election, but on what grounds ; and what political creeds, which are capable of being differentiated as principles or policies of governing? Many people think that Democracy is dead, and will not revive after the War. We in India can learn a new lesson from the trend of events in two biggest democracies of the world—U. S. A. and Great Britain. We have not practised democracy for long, but the little experience we have had, distinctly shows the tendencies that are likely to grow under cover of democracy, and these I have clearly explained in my article "Dictatorship by Proxy" in the CONTEMPORARY REVIEW of London already quoted. A short while ago, the great liberal politician, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastry, addressing a meeting in Kumbakonam, said... "No greater enemy of democracy could be conceived than their elected

the enfranchisement of women. We cannot go back on the recognition of the claims of the minorities and the institution of separate electorates to protect their interests. Will any Party or Group of parties succeed in forming a Cabinet agreeing to administer the country on a non-communal, non-sectarian and non-racial basis? It was Bernard Shaw who said that India needs more than one Dictator. It would be foolhardy on the part of any one at this stage to prophesy that dictatorship or dictatorships will emerge in the Indian political field when she gets complete freedom and independence. In the chapter that follows, giving constructive proposals for the future Constitution of India, I have advocated a Union. A great deal will depend how the map of India is revised to obliterate artificial divisions and frontiers and create homogeneous units. Some form of Party Government may be possible when there is a homogeneous atmosphere amongst the people. Without it democracy and Party Government will be impossible, and some other form of government will have to be thought of, such as a compromise between democracy and autocracy as is followed in some of the advanced Indian States. Mr. C. R. Das expressed

primacy of the people is assured. Under such circumstances there is no *a priori* reason why the head of the State should be an hereditary monarch. The position could equally well be filled by an elected head in a non-monarchical State or by the representative of the King-Emperor in a province of British India." He added, "The employment of the word 'responsible' in its technical constitutional sense in the famous Reforms Declaration of Parliament was unfortunate."

We have to decide between democracy as it is followed in the West or a compromise suited to India, and there can be no doubt that the Mysore constitution is a compromise which may provide the appointment of an elected head in a non-monarchical State.

Constitution-making is a favourite pastime of many people in the world, but it is a truism to say that constitutions grow and are not made, and in India several experiments will have to be made before she finds herself on her feet, and discovers a system by which she can govern herself without any infringement of the rights, privileges of all sections of the people, duly safeguarding

fore, a fear that India would be in serious danger and of no help without such collaboration, or is it due to a real, genuine and bonafide desire to lead India to the path of complete self-government, that the last British offer was made? The answer to this question may be that the present British move in regard to India is due to the fear indicated in the first question. That makes the situation more difficult. But let us leave that alone for the moment and examine the Government proposals for India's future constitution with reference to what has already been done and said during the past decade, or more.

In the Draft declaration, brought by Sir Stafford for discussion, a reference was made to the fulfilment of promises in regard to the future of India. The preamble of the declaration, therefore, at once brings us back to the last war and what was done in 1917 including the pledges that were then given in regard to Dominion Status. A quarter of century is quite an appreciable time as an interval between two stages of political evolution in this country, between which the historian will really not discern any material difference.

Except that after the war the new constitution was to be framed by a constituent assembly to be

troversy. In fact, the people in England got tired of the whole subject and became apathetic and, even when the Congress Governments came into existence, there was a very deep under-current of not only opposition, but resentment, at the spirit with which the Act of 1935 was worked. Sir Stafford, after coming with great hopes of a settlement, retraced his steps back to England just as Mr. Montague, the then Secretary of State in India did, with the difference that he left India very much worse off than before,—almost on the brink of a political revolution which increased the dangers and difficulties of the present war situation. Time is an important factor, and it was natural to expect that right then on the spot Sir Stafford's proposals should have taken a practical form and determined the future control of events leading to the prosecution of the war. .

The second criticism is that the Indian States were given a back seat or rather a position in the whole picture which was not in consonance with their importance, firstly, in regard to the prosecution of the war, and, secondly, in the future constitution of India. All the phrases used in the Draft declaration were not original; in fact they had an old flavour and reading between the lines the historian

upon the Indian people.

The fourth criticism is with regard to consent. The Provinces and the States were given the freedom to stand aside and this they will no doubt do under one objection or another, with the result that the total number of political entities that may hereafter join the Union together may not be sufficient in the quantity and quality to become the real foundation of the future Union. I wonder what the future historian will say about the political meetings that took place between Sir Stafford and the Indian political parties and their leaders, not to speak of individuals summoned from all corners of India in order to ascertain their own personal views on the subject. In fact, Sir Stafford held a miniature Round Table Conference in India, when the enemy was at the door, and, owing to the vague offer, it failed to evoke that enthusiasm which was essential to bring all sections of the Indian people together. Positive, quick and active results of such a conference were from the very first not in sight. Sir Stafford returned to England and reported to the War Cabinet and the Parliament the result of his discussions and negatived the prospects of his Government doing something definite which would bring India forward to a more safe

The British Government have made a gesture promising Dominion Status. They may, however, go a bit further, for the Indian public now has little faith in British pledges. The British Government may pass an emergency measure in Parliament changing the bureaucratic form of government at the centre by the introduction of responsible government for a strong National Executive, fit to undertake the responsibilities of National Defence and National Development. Such an additional gesture may ease the situation as regards the communal problem. The present political deadlock must at all costs be removed and as urged by all parties, a National Government should be formed including the States and Minorities, who may be grouped together on the population basis fixing a minimum of 50 million to exercise their right to elect their leader who will then automatically find a place in the Central Cabinet."

Furthermore, gigantic efforts must be made to utilise all the resources of India and organise all the larger industries, not merely on a war footing for the purpose of giving military supplies of offence and defence throughout the length and breadth of the country, but on a permanent basis under a general scheme of Economic Reconstruction.

matters and in matters of state, is an emphasis on secular rather than religious, and on national rather than racial aspects of all questions. It is extraordinary that every one should acknowledge India's poverty and backwardness in so many respects, and yet every one should unwittingly and unconsciously contribute, by assisting communal and other centrifugal sub-divisions in the country, to prevent the success of ameliorative activity, which alone would diminish that backwardness and that poverty. Foreign rule necessarily emphasises these differences, because they help in continuing the subjection of India.

"In my eyes, all communal organisations are a curse. I detest caste or sectional consciousness. All references to individuals should be on the basis of age, sex or occupation instead of following the vicious example of Anglo-Indian papers, which today takes the form of 'Muslim drowned', 'Hindu run over by motor-car,' and 'Christian absconding.' This must be stopped."

To me, however, it is nothing but a dream to

antagonism in the background.

### *Economic and Industrial*

The remedies that come to my mind will appear to be hackneyed to my readers. Theoretically many have been suggested during the past several years. Without increasing the bulk of this work, I restrict myself to only broad principles.

Capitalism must be controlled by drastic legislation in the Central or Federal Government of this country. The great inequality in the distribution of wealth amongst the rich, the middle and the depressed classes must be reduced. At one stroke of the pen legislation cannot change the habits and mentality of a people, but profiteering, speculation, gambling and other practices can and should be controlled. The resources of the country have to be nationalised so that individual ownership enjoyed to the prejudice of the legitimate rights of others who are entitled to have a decent standard of living can be controlled. How all this can be done is no doubt a vexed question. Between the example of Soviet Russia and the example of some of the European and Latin countries, a happy medium can be hit off. Economic developments should come within a five-year or ten-

of agricultural production, food-stuffs and industrial crops through national effort on a huge scale. All the raw materials of India should be pooled and made available for the development of industries by a central board so that no one part of the country gets undue advantage. Landless classes must be provided for and settled on all unoccupied agricultural land, of which there are in India today millions and billions of acres. Irrigation and Hydro-electric projects, for the development of which there is abundant data available, should come under a five-year or ten-year plan under each tract and be controlled by the National Government.

### *Educational*

The wrongs that India suffers through its present system of education have been dealt with already. There is unemployment amongst the educated young men. There is a great disparity amongst the number of school-going population between the primary grade pupils and those that go to the higher standards. Primary education should be made compulsory, free and universal. University education must be remodelled, chiefly for the development of the resources of the country. Moral and religious standards may be left to be

should be the motto. All hospitals should be made free for all classes and communities and no communal hospital should be allowed. Rural medical aid and improvement of sanitation should be controlled by a National Health Board. Medical services should be reorganised throughout the country, and while the medical faculties of the universities necessitate further developments, the necessity for adequate attention being paid to eye-sight, teeth and health of pupils of schools should be emphasised under a national system of supervision. Sports, athletics and competition thereunder should also be nationalised and co-ordinated on a non-communal basis.

India being the victim of epidemic diseases, such as small-pox, typhoid, cholera, tropical fevers and other ailments, due to conditions of climate, low standard of living, insanitary towns and villages, a gigantic drive has to be effected in the country against the scourge of such diseases by special effort. More money has to be spent on *prevention* of diseases, research and treatment of the poor in rural areas. What is now being done has hardly touched even the fringe of the problem. The mortality owing to all such causes is appalling, and the loss of man and woman power in the country

have got to take a leaf out of the book of every civilised country. A great deal will depend on the part India will play in the post-war reconstruction of the whole world. The treatment of foreigners, the trade agreements with foreign countries, the employment of foreign experts to help India in the development of large industries, the inter-change of shipping and economic facilities have all to be considered from a new angle of vision, viz., to make India free, independent, self-supporting and yet a strong nation constituting a faithful and powerful ally of nations who uphold order, progress and humanity.

of this idea through the various stages of development since 1930.

More than a decade ago, the Muslim viewpoint confined itself chiefly to the protection of the communal interests of the Muslims under two main heads, viz.,

- (1) Representation by separate electorates.
- (2) Representation in the Public Services.

In 1928, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan published a pamphlet entitled "What are the Rights of the Muslim Minority in India?" At the time, the Muslims did not conceive the idea of territorial re-distribution, and the leading exponents demanded protection of their minority rights through separate electorates. They also claimed a certain percentage of representation in the All-India and Provincial Cabinets which was then fixed at a minimum of 33%.

The Muslim view-point has widened very much since. In 1940, at the session in Lahore the All-India Muslim League resolved as follows :

"Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League, that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following

"Only after the British had left India, would an election take place and at that election each province would be asked to vote on the Pakistan issue. In those provinces where the Muslims were in a majority, and they were in a majority only in such parts of the country as were never thought of by Hindus as belonging to India until the British created British India—the population would be asked to show by its vote whether it would remain as part of Hindu India or would prefer a sovereign state to be made for its own people. Even if those majorities decided in favour of keeping separate from Hindu India nothing would be lost.

"Under the Pakistan scheme Muslims would be masters of all those parts where Muslims were in a majority and the Hindus would be masters of the other parts. All other relations such as trade, commerce and culture between Hindu India and Pakistan would continue to be as at present.

"There was nothing wrong in conceding the demand for Pakistan. Under Pakistan, Hindu India and Pakistan would grow strong and they would have to maintain close and friend-

nstitution. It seems, therefore, that unless there is a union of States or Kingdoms with full political autonomy for the various tracts geographically distinct, and racially and linguistically separate, the Indian problem will not be solved.

Is it possible to reconcile this doctrine with any kind of constitutional rearrangement of Indian Provinces without giving undue prominence to the Hindu-Muslim tension ? I think the answer is in the affirmative, and here is a suggestion.

The solution of the political problem in India is the substitution of the Empire of India by a League of Dominions, Indian States or Kingdoms. Out of what is known as British India, thirteen racially and linguistically homogeneous Kingdoms or States could be constituted. Twelve of the principal Indian States could be raised to the rank of Kingdoms and thus given the same status. Outside the North-Western Frontier, the Punjab and the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, no less than eight racially and linguistically homogeneous, kingdoms could be constituted. Bengal might be made a kingdom with two autonomous provinces so that the Hindus would form one province and the Muslims the other. In none of these divisions would the Hindu-Muslim question arise.

ders of the Dravidian culture a Dravidistan consisting of Tinnevelly, Madura, Trichnopoly, Tanjore, South Arcot, Chingleput and Madras. The whole of the Northern Circars likewise, which are sharply divided by reason of racial characteristics, language, and religious observances and customs, may be given a Telugustan or the Andhra Desa, as it is called, and this may comprise all the Telegu districts where Telegu is the official language with Rajamundry as its capital. There is on the West Coast of India the Malabar country which has its own social system, viz., Matriarchal. Why not have a Malayalastan ! The cultural differences between the Tamil, Telegu and the Malayali peoples are not negligible.

I have only to add that the population of Bengal, Behar, Tamilnad, Malabar and other proposed divisions is sufficiently large and the territories geographically distinct to render the constitution of sovereign states easy. Sind, Behar and Orissa, also Assam have already acquired provincial status.

The question of the All-India constitution such as a Union Parliament, the Representation of the Dominions therein, are naturally complicated. The constitution of Soviet Russia, including within the Soviet Union various Republics

"The Central Subjects would be: Defence, Foreign Relations, Currency, Credit, Customs, Federal Taxes on Income, Immigration, Emigration, Naturalisation, Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, Waterways, and Development of Industries.

"If the federal constitution with residuary powers for the federating units is accepted, there would be no objection to a re-arrangement of boundaries for the federating states, so as to allow Muslims in areas in which they form the majority to constitute themselves into semi-autonomous units.

"There would be a charter of fundamental rights guaranteeing the personal, civil and religious liberties of every individual. The state will give full protection to the minorities with regard to those interests which they regard as fundamental to their separate existence as minorities, with special reference to education, language, religion and personal law. All minorities shall have equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense charitable and religious institutions and schools and establishments, for instruction and education, with a right to use their

the sub-continent as a Parliament of Princes, and peoples, on the basis of justice and equality. The degradation and depression due to poverty, caste and religious distinctions have to be wiped out, and in the charter of the new constitution, fundamental rights of men and women have to be protected for all time. Is there anything more inspiring than the preamble to the constitution of the American Union which reads as follows :

"We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Mr. Streit, in his book UNION NOW, suggested an Executive Board of five members, three elected from the fifteen democracies directly by the citizens of the Union, one by the House of Deputies and one by the Senate, both Senate and Deputies constituting the Congress. The system of rotation was suggested so that each member may be a President for a term of one year. Why not consider these as feasible pro-

## B

## THE FUTURE OF INDIAN STATES

I have not dealt with the Indian States in the rough sketch of the future Union of India, but briefly stated that at least twelve of the principal Indian States could be raised to the rank of Kingdoms, and given the Status of Dominion. My view is that there is no justification for continuing the sovereignty and separate entity of over 600 States. In the New World Order in which India will take a prominent place, there will be no analogy or example of that kind in any part of the world. They cannot preserve their separate status or independence in any shape or form. The Union Government will be greatly hampered if they have to afford military and other protection individually to these hundreds of small States. On the other hand, the larger States are sufficiently important to be constituted into Dominions with full independence.

A few extracts from Chapter 10 on Ruling Princes of my book THE INDIAN TANGLE, published in London nearly ten years ago, will be a fitting introduction to the subject, now agitating the minds of the Princes and the intelligent section amongst their subjects, at the present time.

Confederacy. The Nizam of Hyderabad represents, with lesser Mohammedan rulers those who survived the downfall of Muslim supremacy. It is a characteristic feature that in some of the important States, the rulers are neither of the same race nor of the same creed as the majority of their subjects. The conspicuous examples are the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maharaja of Kashmir. The States cover an area of 6,75,000 square miles, and vary in size from a few square miles to a country as large as Italy such as Hyderabad, with a population of 14½ millions. They have come at varying times under the suzerain authority of the British Government through definite treaties entered into with the rulers individually. The status and authority of these princes was the subject of an investigation by the Committee presided over by Sir Harcourt Butler in 1928.

In concluding the Report, the Committee said :—

“While impressed with the need for great caution in dealing with a body so heterogeneous as the Indian Princes, so conservative, so sensitive, so tenacious of internal

position and status of the Indian Princes themselves have necessarily to be outside the jurisdiction of any Federal Government or Union that may be set up. They include minority administration, training of heirs, the civil lists, foreign travel, State budget and finance, palace and military, and personal conduct of Ruling Princes. The Princes played a great part in the first Round Table Conference by agreeing to come into the Federal Scheme and thus surrendering their position of isolated grandeur and internal sovereignty up to a certain point. Their attitude of co-operation in the work of framing the new constitution rendered it possible for the Conference to come to a unanimous resolution regarding Responsibility at the Centre with safeguards and reservations. But no section of the conference at the time fully realised the implications and obligations involved before the Federal structure could be built on a solid foundation. The result as I then anticipated was a cleavage of opinion between various groups representing the Indian States, one standing for the Federal India, and the other championing a system

federations. Under the New Order, it will be impossible for the smaller States in India to exist economically as military and other protection have to be afforded to these hundreds of small States. We have to consider the respective merits of the "Merger" and the Confederation Schemes, and whichever way Indian India is regrouped into Dominions, we have got to guard against the criticism that bigger States are being organised as a Second Line of Defence against India's demand for freedom. On the other hand, it is well to bear in mind what Dr. Benes, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, said in his speech before the Manchester University on the future of Central Europe. He said :

"We must think of a more intelligent division of Europe into units which themselves represent a satisfactory balance of political, economic and territorial facts."

The union idea in the previous chapter indicated presupposes that each Dominion will be economically self-sufficient and enjoy full autonomy subject to its being linked up with a strong Federal Government which will concern itself with the defence of all India, under arrangements with each

States or groups of States constituted as members of the Union of India will have a right of representation to the Union Parliament, the number of representatives being fixed on the population basis for the whole of India. The election may be on the same principle as applied to the other parts grouped as Dominions.

The old order must give place to the new, and those that stand for vested interests in any shape or form and not for Government for the common good of the people should know that their days are numbered after this war. This applies to India as well. If strife and struggle for power by certain sections alone continue, there will surely be a revolt from within which will make India a prey for more than one generation to foreign aggression and exploitation.

or rather was not able to exercise any potent influence. Individually, the noble sons, of India raised her in the estimation of the world at large by their achievements in the domain of literature, science, and valuable research in various fields. Apart from these, India's place is inferior in status as she does not count for much in any plan or scheme so far enunciated for world reconstruction as conceived by eminent thinkers. That clearly shows want of recognition of India's place in the world or her true potentialities. Take Streit for example, who in his famous book UNION Now, published before the war, suggested a federation of fifteen democracies of the world, including the British Empire but excluding India on the ground that India's politically inexperienced millions cannot be included on the same population basis as the Western democracies. H. G. Wells, in his book THE NEW ORDER deliberately excluded in his scheme Russia, India, Near and Far East as having very little to do in the creation of a New World Order, meaning evidently, European Order, and yet his ideals as defined in the following words are of universal application.

"The establishment of a progressive world socialism in which the freedom, health and

in a broadcast on the Post-War Reconstruction said, "It will be our hope that the United Nations headed by the British Commonwealth of Nations, U. S. A. and Soviet Russia should immediately begin to confer upon the future world organisation which is to be our safeguard against future wars." He conceived the idea of the Council of Europe and a Council of Asia, and added, *that the permanent interests of Britain, United States and Russia have to be harmonised.* In the world to come India has no definite future foreshadowed by those who have started reconstructing the world in their own way. The point I wish to make is, that both in the United States and in the British Commonwealth, the place that India holds today is not one of very great consequence.

The place India has in other Asiatic countries need not be described in detail, except that, being independent, these countries naturally consider themselves higher in political status, as Egypt; the Arab Federation, Persia, Afghanistan, not to speak of China and Japan.

European countries like France and Holland which have large Colonial Empires did not view with favour India's nationalist movement or her desire for freedom. In South Africa the policy

much that other Asiatics neither value nor understand. India is apart from the rest of the world including most of Asia." And yet, according to Sir George Schuster, "India cannot live to herself or work out her own future untroubled from the outside world. In Jawaharlal Nehru's book, UNITY OF INDIA, he said: "There can be no world arrangement which is based on ignoring India or China."

This brings us again to the main question what place India is to have in the world to come. No one can picture what the world will be after this war, whether politically there will be a federation in the West as well as in the East to prevent future wars and how the Axis powers will be dealt with. We have no doubt, many expositions of our war and peace aims and many schemes. But every cupboard has a skeleton and there is no country which has not any domestic problem that may shake the very foundation of a stable understanding at the Peace Conference. U. S. A. has her colour problem, her titanic struggle between labour and capital, the aftermath of her lease and lend policy and the economic crisis that is to follow in the wake of a devastated Europe, millions of unemployed men and women, shortage of food and other

Confederation of Pacific States, the Confederation of Western and South-Western Asiatic States."

Will India emerge after the war from all these spheres of conflict, competition and confusion as a free country collaborating on equal terms with the United Nations at the Peace Conference? What part will India and China play in the future re-adjustment of relationship between East and West, between Europe and Asia? These are questions which cannot be slurred over and to which I fear I cannot give clear answers. This much, however, is certain. Agreements and reconciliation between rival interests in each country or group of countries will be difficult to reach. As an inferior nation, India will be handicapped as a member of the Peace Conference in the settlement of world problems unless she is given an independent status.

We in India stand to lose everything unless we endeavour to bring into existence a Union of India with an independent status holding equal partnership with the Reconstructed British Commonwealth and other Unions. Now is the time to think and act and take constructive steps to secure her future place in the world to come.

The internal situation in India, it is true, is

policy and defence must be reached throughout the world with India as an equal partner. This presupposes a Federal Centre through a political Union of a group of countries allied together geographically, culturally and by natural instincts. We will have to reconsider Streit's scheme of "Union Now" in a different light.

What are the alternatives before India, when the New World Order comes into being? The new European Order whether it be a federation of nations, or a New League with effective powers, will give sufficient incentive to individual European nations to come into a group that suits their own traditional as well as racial inclinations, but what about Asia? Some fear that a treaty between the U. S. A. and Great Britain will establish a formidable Union, and as between the two there will be a tug-of-war as to which one succeeds in directing the policy of the New World Order, especially in countries yet to be exploited, for raw materials. Will India have a fair deal when she sets about framing the new constitution? Recently, the well-known Editor, Mr. John Jessup in an article in LIFE said, "Asia's distrust of Britain is one of the circumstances which will be a danger to the United States when she gets wedded to Great Britain's

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, soon after the war was declared, stressed the importance of dealing with the Indian problems as an international one, and in this he is right. But does he give sufficient importance to the necessity of unity in India within herself without which she cannot be reckoned with, even now during the war or after? Foreign writers are trying to impress upon us this paramount need. According to Schuster whom I have already quoted, the two bastions of Western civilisation must be the British Commonwealth and the United States, and the bastions in the East must be India and China. When the new constitution of India is going to be framed a provision for international sphere of action to preserve peace as between the two groups should be made. It would take a long time after the war, for Europe to revive and do anything economically substantial to contribute towards world peace in the future.

## { WHAT IS WRONG WITH INDIA

she will undergo a process of disintegration in the course of her struggle for independence without the requisite strength to hold it against foreign military aggression or economic exploitation. But one can reasonably hope that the sagacity of India's leading Elder Statesmen as well as the brain power, energy and foresight of the younger leaders of the country will join together to bring India to her proper place in the world to be. Let us all hope that what is wrong with India today be a thing of the past and a new era in the national life of the great country will dawn at the end of this devastating and cruel global war.